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STEWARDS' CL
IS SWITCHED
TO SATURDAY

Davis
loses
despite
late
flourish



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THE TIMES

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WEDNESDAY APRIL 28 1993

45p

Business leaders attack Tories over economy

■ The recession is over — or is it?
Stinging attacks on the government from
the ultra-loyal Institute of Directors
suggest caution should be the keyword

By Philip Bassett, Industrial Editor

BUSINESS leaders punctured the euphoria of ministers proclaiming the end of the recession yesterday, declaring that the economy was recovering in spite of government policy not because of it, and that it could still be killed off.

In an attack reminiscent of the CBI's "bare-knuckled fight" of the eighties, the Institute of Directors' director-general said the government had got things wrong at almost every turn and any recovery was "more or less over the dead bodies of the Treasury and the Bank of England".

Peter Morgan was backed by Sir Alastair Grant, chairman of the Argyll group, who accused the government of fundamental errors of judgment, and even the former industry secretary Lord Young of Grafton said the economy was still in "intensive care".

by Sir Alastair, who said Norman Lamont should have "retired himself" after Britain was forced to pull out of the ERM. "Instead, we find him suggesting that in some curious way the new exchange rate and the lower interest rates were the result of policy — frankly that makes me quite uncomfortable."

"Twice the Tories have made fundamental errors of judgment in their conduct of the economy — too strong a foot on the accelerator in the latter part of the 80s — too savage a foot on the brakes in the early 90s." It was now up to the prime minister to display vision and leadership to take Britain into a period of sustained growth.

Even Lord Young said that the economic recovery now under way was fragile. "The patient is still in intensive care. We cannot afford any sudden shocks or swings of policy."

The fierce assault angered ministers, but Mr Major maintained his optimistic tone in spite of the brickbats. In the Commons he said British manufacturers now had the chance to break into new markets and win back old ones. "Manufacturing matters," he said. "Exporting matters. We are seeking to support them both."

The CBI meanwhile expressed cautious optimism over the economy. While government figures published this week showed output rising for the first time for two-and-a-half years, the CBI's industrial trends survey showed that output was still broadly flat.

While business confidence showed its sharpest increase for a decade, and industrialists expect output to rise, the CBI would only go as far as saying that the recovery was under way, adding that it would wait for at least three months before thinking about joining the government in proclaiming the end of the recession.

CBI optimism, page 21
IOD speeches, page 22



Ministers' discomfort at the attacks will be all the greater because they came from the ultra-loyal institute, which has been the source of many Conservative policies over the past two decades especially on union and tax reform.

The criticism centred not only on economic policy, but on the competence of John Major's government and on ministers' claims to be the architects of the recovery. "To think that after the pain of the early 80s, they let the Lawson boom rip," Mr Morgan said. "And to think that we went into the exchange-rate mechanism in the way we did when it was obvious to the IOD, and to others, that in its perversity, the ERM would deliver just the opposite of what was hoped for. It is a blinding revelation. It is not, that to the extent that we have a recovery today, it is more or less over the dead bodies of Bank and Treasury officials."

His criticisms were echoed

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PRINCESS MAKES PLEA ON EATING DISORDERS



Call for understanding: the Princess of Wales addressing the conference yesterday

Children caught in 'spiral of despair'

By James Landale

CLEARLY echoing her own experience of bulimia, the Princess of Wales spoke yesterday of the "spiral of despair" felt by children suffering from eating disorders and called for greater understanding of the diseases.

Speaking in London at a conference on eating disorders, she said that illnesses such as anorexia and bulimia became a "shameful friend" to children trying to cope with difficult situations in their lives. Sufferers starve themselves to lose weight even while dangerously thin.

More children are suffering from anorexia nervosa than ever before, research has shown. About 40 anorexic children aged between eight and 14 are admitted to The Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, in London, each year compared with two a year in 1983. Although only a tenth of adult sufferers are male, about a quarter of the children are boys. Some have lost up to half their body weight and about two fifths fail to make a full recovery.

The princess, who suffered from bulimia, a disease in which binge-eating is followed by self-induced vomiting, said that eating disorders were not an expression of female vanity. "Eating disorders, whether it be anorexia or bulimia, show how individuals can turn the nourishment of the body into a painful attack on themselves and they have at the core a far deeper problem than mere vanity," she said. "Eating disorders are on the increase at a disturbing rate, affecting a growing number of men and women and a growing number of children, too."

She told the conference of Continued on page 2, col 4

Alan Hamilton, page 14

RAF prepares to join Nato bombing raids against Serbs

By Michael Evans and Our Foreign Staff

DETAILED planning for RAF aircraft to join a Nato mission bombing Serb targets was nearing completion last night as President Yeltsin fell into line with President Clinton and declared that the time had come for decisive measures to halt the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

As the move towards tougher action gathered pace, military chiefs on both sides of the Atlantic voiced strong doubts about launching air strikes. Field Marshal Sir Richard Vincent, chairman of Nato's military committee, said soldiers risked being stuck in the former Yugoslav

the Serbs could not expect Russian protection if they resisted the will of the world community, adding: "The time has come for decisive measures to quell the conflict."

Mr Yeltsin's defence and foreign ministers, however, distanced themselves from any move to sever Russia's historical bond with Serbia, urging the international community to avoid "unilateral, unreasoned and violent actions".

Such qualms over intervention, long expressed by Britain and France, were emphasised in Brussels, where Sir Richard told a meeting of Nato's national chiefs of staff: "For God's sake, decide what you're trying to achieve before you go out." Any action in the Balkans needed a clear political aim. "The military out there are not an end in themselves. If we go out on the basis that we're an end in ourselves, we will be there halfway through the next century."

The meeting did not formally discuss air strikes because Nato has received no official request to act for the UN, but Mr Clinton's determination to take stronger action is forcing member states to plan for bombing missions. A squadron of Tornados GR1s, equipped with laser targeting equipment, is being recommended as the most potent force, possibly with Buccaneer aircraft from RAF Lossiemouth as back-up. Jaguars from RAF Coltishall in Norfolk could also be sent if troops needed close air support.

Although it has been suggested that the launch of air strikes would necessarily mean the end of the humanitarian aid operation in Bosnia, Continued on page 11, col 4

Peter Riddell, page 10
Yeltsin repays West, page 11
Letters, page 16



republic "halfway through the next century", and Admiral David Jeremiah, vice-chairman of America's joint chiefs of staff, said there could be no quick and painless action.

Mr Clinton has said that he will announce within days his plan of action to force the Serbs to sign the Vance-Owen peace plan. "It is now clear that the United States and our allies need to move forward with a stronger policy," he said. With the Russian referendum out of the way, Mr Yeltsin also made clear that

Police have bomb suspect descriptions

By Christopher Elliott and Richard Ford

THREE IRA suspects were described in the terrorist alert flashed to all police forces by the special branch on the eve of the Bishopsgate bombing last Saturday. Police are resisting calls to make public the detailed descriptions.

Scotland Yard has confirmed yesterday's disclosure in *The Times* that there had been a specific bomb alert before the explosion which killed *News of the World* photographer Edward Henry

but has refused to breach security by giving other details contained in the confidential memorandum.

Press reports criticising their refusal to release the detailed descriptions and the fact that the bombers got through to the City of London despite the warning have infuriated senior officers. One said last night: "It's a bit thick being criticised for not having intelligence and then when we do get some, being slated for not releasing sensitive material."

A meeting of chief constables yesterday called for new

police powers to mount stop-and-search roadblocks if in a local chief constable's assessment, there is a risk of a terrorist attack. Existing powers allow vehicle checks only if there is "reasonable suspicion that a crime has been committed". The chief constables also discussed growing calls from local authorities for massive increases of closed-circuit security cameras in towns and cities.

In the wake of criticism of the relationship between M15 and the police and the number of agencies involved in the

fight against terrorism, Brian Johnston, chairman of the terrorism committee of the Association of Chief Police Officers, said: "The co-ordination in our efforts against terrorism has never been better."

The inquest into the death of Mr Henry, 34, was told yesterday that his body was found 20 yards from the blast inside a devastated bank. Dr Peter Vanezis, a pathologist, told the hearing at the City of London coroners court that Mr Henry died from multiple injuries and would have been

killed instantly. Mr Henry's widow, Yasmin, placed a bouquet of colourful flowers on the spot where her husband's body was found. "I've lost my oldest and dearest friend," she said.

Up to 10 people arrested on Monday were still being detained and questioned under the Prevention of Terrorism Act last night.

Church campaign, page 3
Simon Jenkins and Diary, page 16
Letters, page 17
Battered NatWest, page 22

Teachers berate exam advisers

By Ben Preston, Education Reporter

TEACHERS accused government examination advisers of gross incompetence yesterday after the first geography tests for seven-year-olds were sent to schools up to three months late.

The delay put the tests for 600,000 pupils in jeopardy and fuelled teachers' dissatisfaction as two unions balloted their members to join the boycott of national curriculum tests this summer.

The School Examinations and Assessment Council (Seac), which is responsible for developing and distributing the tests, said the hold-up was

a matter of considerable regret. A spokesman acknowledged that the late arrival meant teachers were unlikely to use many of the geography tests this term.

The episode is an embarrassment to John Patten, the education secretary, as he fights to safeguard this summer's tests for children at seven, 11 and 14 against opposition from all six teaching unions. Ministers privately blame the council for triggering the dispute with its inept handling of English tests for 14-year-olds.

The geography tests were

scheduled for distribution to 20,000 primary schools in England and Wales at the beginning of February, to be completed between the spring and summer half-terms. But the council did not send any until just before the Easter holiday — with at least one in ten receiving them only last week — cutting time available by half. They involve up to ten assessments for each child lasting 20 minutes each.

Although the tests are optional, the council expects teachers to use them in drawing up their annual marks for Continued on page 2, col 8

Senate advised to strip Andreotti of immunity

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN ROME

GIULIO Andreotti's day of judgment appeared to be dawning at last yesterday when an Italian senate committee recommended that his parliamentary immunity from prosecution be lifted so that he can face prosecution for alleged collusion with the Mafia.

The decision must be approved in a secret vote by a full session of the upper house of parliament next month, but committee recommendations in such cases are usually

accepted. Signor Andreotti, the elder statesman of Italian post-war politics and former prime minister, claims that Mafia supergrasses are plotting to discredit him.

Yesterday's committee decision came as Guido Azeleglio Ciampi, a non-parliamentarian, prepared to take over as prime minister to bring in the electoral reforms Italians hope will begin a new political era free of corruption.

Andreotti's armour, page 13

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Pressure mounts to rebuild City church wrecked by bomb

By RUTH GLEDHILL AND SHEILA GUNN

A campaign is swelling for what remains of the medieval St Ethelburga's church to become a symbol of triumph over terrorism

THE Church of England is facing strong public pressure, led by MPs and peers, to restore the tiny St Ethelburga's Bishopsgate church which was destroyed by the IRA bomb in the City of London at the weekend. Many people want the church to be rebuilt, possibly as a shrine to the victims of terrorism.

Hopes that the church could be restored were set back when church leaders said it was too badly damaged. English Heritage said rebuilding would be "not a restoration but a replica".

However, there was strong support at parliament for St Ethelburga's to be rebuilt. Patrick Cormack, chairman of the Conservative party advisory committee on arts and heritage, said: "It would be wholly appropriate to restore it, if nothing else as a monument to all those who have perished at the hands of these evil people."

Lord Harris of Greenwich, Liberal Democrat spokesman on home affairs and a former

Home Office minister, has tabled a question to the government asking for help towards restoring St Ethelburga's and the other churches damaged by the Bishopsgate bomb.

The national heritage department said that as the church was a Grade I listed building, the City corporation must decide whether to require the owners to restore the building. Until that was done, the government was not involved.

One public relations company offered to run a free fund-raising appeal to help rebuild the church. But the first archaeologist to assess the damage said yesterday that St Ethelburga's had been destroyed.

Church leaders are considering incorporating the remains of the devastated medieval church in a monument or commemorative chapel to the victims of terrorism.

The Ven George Cassidy, Archdeacon of London, said: "The tragedy is that we could never reconstitute it."

The city's church heritage has been irreparably damaged by the IRA, with only two medieval churches surviving untouched, according to Dr John Schofield, of the Museum of London archaeology service. He completed his first report yesterday after a day-long survey of the three most damaged churches. The London diocese of the Church of England is this week considering what can be salvaged.

Of the 39 churches in the square mile, only five were medieval and survived the second world war. St Ethelburga's, founded in 1250 and rebuilt in 1390, was the smallest and took the full force of Saturday's blast.

The church was valued last year at £2 million, but an insurance policy introduced after last year's bomb reduced terrorist cover on the building to £100,000. The church was due to be converted into a chapel of ease.

The bomb exploded immediately outside St Ethelburga's and reduced to a pile of rubble all but the east wall, half the north and south walls and one arch of the medieval arcade. The west wall and the interior, including a 17th century stained glass window, have completely gone.

The church will not be lost without a fight. Tony Kilmister, chairman of the Prayer Book Society, said: "Terrorism must not win. God must triumph in every situation. Never, never, never must he come off second best. That includes not letting terrorism triumph at St Ethelburga's."

If the church is not rebuilt, one problem will be the disposal of £30,000-a-year income from funds left to the church by Robert Kitchen in 1557. The diocese will consult the Council for the Care of Churches before deciding on the future of St Ethelburga's.



Ruined: St Ethelburga's now has only one full wall

Science Museum recruits schoolchildren for space mission



Future architect: Rachel McConnell, 12, of Alderholt, Dorset, at the Science Museum in London yesterday with the model of a space city that she designed. Her entry came first among 5,000 entries for a competition held by the museum and BBC Television's Newsround programme and wins her a week at the Alabama space centre. Paul Jones, 14, of Northwich, Cheshire, was second and Alex Woolton, 10, of Crickhowell, Powys, came third

Staff pay price of hold-ups

By MICHAEL HORSNELL

ROBBERIES of banks and building societies have more than doubled since 1989, with over 1,800 last year causing growing long-term distress to staff victims, according to figures released yesterday by the Banking, Insurance and Finance Union.

The worst-hit areas, accounting for half the national total, were London (30 per cent of robberies), the West Midlands (8 per cent), Greater Manchester (8 per cent) and Avon (4 per cent). There was also a significant increase in violent robbery in rural areas — a finding in line with general crime trends in shire counties.

Ray Shuttleworth, secretary to the union's security committee, said: "Staff are often reluctant to confess that they

are terrified or to share their feelings. Many suffer in silence." He said that raids, now numbering about seven every working day, were increasingly violent and that victims often faced long-term trauma.

The union called for improved care for victims of robberies, whose distress can sometimes cost them their jobs, and a ban on the advertising and sale of replica guns. Reintroduction of counter screens and significant improvements in staff training — including how to deal with extortion, hostage-taking and the handling of bulk cash deliveries — are also being sought from the financial institutions.

Criminals are using real hand-guns and shotguns more frequently but there is

also a considerable risk from knives and chemicals, said the union, which represents over 150,000 people throughout the financial services industry.

Last year, there was a 12 per cent increase in robbery over 1991, including 940 raids on building societies and 842 on banks in a total of 1,826, which also includes attacks on security delivery guards. Nearly every incident involved a weapon or a replica. The figures are derived from information from staff, news and police sources.

The union's report was in response to a new year consultation document on armed robbery by the Health and Safety Executive. The executive said that it planned to issue definitive guidance this year.

Baby found alive after siege ends in murder

By RICHARD DUCE

A YEAR-OLD baby was rescued crying but well yesterday when armed police entered a house after a five-hour siege and found the bodies of his grandparents.

The dead couple, believed to be in their late forties, had died from gunshot wounds. Police were called to the house in Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, after reports that the grandfather had entered the home of his estranged wife with a shotgun.

Divorce proceedings were under way between the couple and the man was on bail awaiting trial at Norwich Crown Court on charges of threatening to kill his wife.

After trained siege negotiators tried for five hours to

make contact with the couple, police entered the terraced house at 7am. The deaths are being treated as murder and suicide. The woman had been shot in the head and the man died from a shotgun wound to his chest.

Neighbours saw the baby's mother run from the house after her father arrived and she called the police. Barry Mason, a neighbour, said: "I could hear the baby banging on the wall. The walls are paper-thin and I heard the child crying all night."

Police said that they would not identify the dead couple until today and that no one else was being sought in connection with the incident. An inquest will be held.

Champion returns to form

By JOHN SHAW

AFTER spending more than 30 years in various garden sheds, the bones of a racing legend finally return to a fitting resting place at the National Horse Racing Museum, Newmarket, next month.

The skeleton of Hyperion, one of the most influential stallions in British racing, has been reassembled by the Animal Health Trust, 33 years after its death in 1960. It will be unveiled next month by Peter Stanley, nephew of Lord Derby, the horse's owner, and will then go on show at the High Street museum.

Hyperion was a racing legend and won the Derby and St Leger for Lord Derby in 1933. The animal stood as a stallion for 25 years, in six of which it was champion sire in Britain and Ireland but, suffering from an inflammation of a thin layer of sensitive tissue in the hoof, it was put down aged 30.

Its body was sent to the trust for a post-mortem examination and the bones were cleaned, but it was not until last year that Dr Andrew Higgins, the trust's director, arranged for Hyperion to be professionally reassembled.

Girl seeks freedom to leave adopters

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

A THIRTEEN-year-old girl who launched an unprecedented legal challenge to break away from her adoptive parents appealed yesterday against a judge's order effectively blocking her action.

The case is thought to be the first in which a child has tried to use the Children Act 1989 to end a failed relationship with adopters. The girl wants to live with an aunt at the home of her natural father's parents, with whom she has kept in touch.

Last November, a district judge in Bristol gave the girl leave to seek a residence order, after accepting that she had sufficient maturity and understanding to bring the action.

However, her adoptive parents took the case to the High Court, where Mr Justice Thorpe made her a ward of court, with the Official Solicitor as her legal guardian. This effectively took away her right to instruct lawyers and take action under the Children Act, which came into force in 1991.

The girl's Court of Appeal application raises questions over what lawyers see as conflict between old-style wardship proceedings and the act's

provisions for a child of sufficient understanding to go to court for a ruling on its future.

The girl — referred to only as "C" — listened as her counsel, Miss Judith Parker QC, told the judges that she was currently with foster parents under a voluntary arrangement with her local authority.

"It is quite plain that this is an adoption placement which has broken down, even though the couple may have hopes that it can be mended in the future," Miss Parker said. "C wants to live with a member of her original family." The case continues today.

□ Incompetent solicitors' clerks are no longer to be paid legal aid fees for advising suspects at police stations under a new licensing scheme announced by the Law Society and Legal Aid Board yesterday.

In the wake of damning research for the Royal Commission on Criminal Justice, which found suspects were often advised by untrained and inexperienced clerks, only those clerks who pass a competence test are to be paid under legal aid. The scheme will be brought in on October 1994.

Couple sue garden designer

By A STAFF REPORTER

A LANCASHIRE couple won £20,000 in damages after their spectacular water and rock garden, designed by an award-winning gardener, turned out to be more of "a cross between a paddy field and a moat".

John and Joan Hoban paid Dougie Knight, 52, winner of a Chelsea Flower Show award, £25,000 to transform their one-acre garden in Ormskirk.

Making the award, Judge Lynch said: "The garden falls below the usual high standard of the defendant. The water runs down what looks like a set of roof tiles and would not score many points in a competition."

The Hobans said their garden flooded every time it rained and they had to turn on emergency pumps. Mrs Hoban, 59, said: "We chose this man because of his reputation. He said the Chelsea Flower Show was his shop window. We wanted something special, but it turned out to be a cross between a paddy field and a moat."

Mr Knight had said the flooding was caused by problems with the drains.

Directors blame insurance giant

INEFFICIENCY and policy poaching by Legal & General, the insurance company, helped to bring about the multi-million pound collapse of a company set up to help council house tenants to buy their homes, an Old Bailey jury was told yesterday.

It was alleged that the company not only failed to notify Homes Assured Corporation of the cancellation of insurance policies but caused considerable hardship to some of those who took out mortgages under the government's right to buy scheme.

Anthony Dobson, 59, of Chelsea, southwest London; Michael Robinson, 42, of Fulham, southwest London; and Keith Woodward, 56, of Wansstead, east London, all former directors of Homes Assured, deny fraudulent trading between November 1988 and August 1989.

In addition, Dobson denies two charges of procuring the execution of a valuable security by deception, and

Woodward one charge of furnishing false information.

David Penry-Davey QC said Mr Woodward had made "tremendous efforts" to ensure the company's success. But he was up against a large number of difficulties from the start.

He said it quickly became clear that Legal & General, which had a tied agents agreement with Homes Assured, was "wholly incapable" of coping with the amount of work it had. Both Legal & General and, at a later stage, the Criterion Insurance Company, were "unable to keep Homes Assured properly informed of the proper level of cancellations". Mr Penry-Davey said. He claimed the insurance company's inability to process policy applications on time caused "considerable hardship" to home owners and led to further cancellations.

In addition, Legal & General "poached" policies from Homes Assured and "actively encouraged" the

cancellation of many of them. "With hindsight, it is clear that the failure of the insurance companies in notifying Homes Assured of the cancellation of insurance policies was the main cause of the liquidation of the company," he said.

Nigel Mylne QC, for Mr Robinson, also criticised Legal & General's "administrative problems". He said that after the agency agreement between the two companies ended, Legal & General "poached" large numbers of salesmen from Homes Assured and went directly to its clients to persuade them to cancel their orders."

Mr Alan Tyrrell QC, for Mr Dobson, told the jury one of the issues it would have to consider was the prosecution's allegation that his client had "lied" about his own financial situation to secure £500,000 backing for his group. "There was no dishonesty and no lie," Mr Tyrrell said.

The trial continues today.

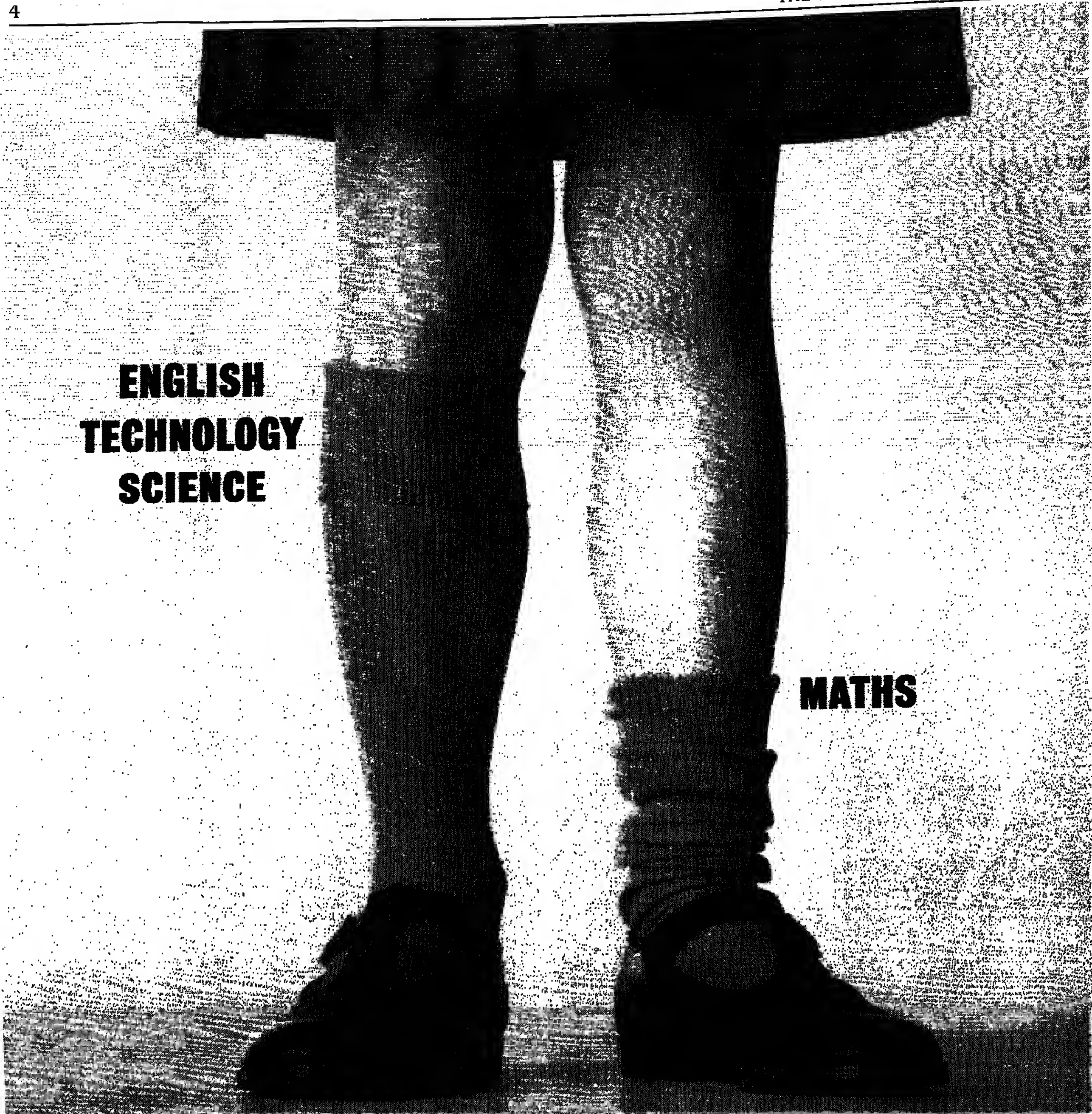
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مكتبة الاول

Minister urges caution on figures

Hospitals explain surgery death rate

By JEREMY LAURANCE
HEALTH SERVICES
CORRESPONDENT

HOSPITALS whose patients have high death rates after general surgery offered a range of explanations yesterday for their poor showing.

The figures, taken from statistics on hospital performance issued to health authorities by the health department and published in yesterday's Times, showed that some hospitals had death rates after general surgery that were six times higher than others. There were also big variations in waiting times, and the number of operations cancelled.

Dr Brian Mawhinney, the health minister, said it would be a mistake to attach great significance to any one year's figures. "But if over time a trend emerges, that starts to tell you things."

Yorkshire regional health authority said the high death rates in hospitals in Pontefract, Grimsby and Scun-

thorpe, which ranged from 60 per cent to 95 per cent above the expected rate, could be explained by the slow development of the hospice movement in the region. Terminally ill patients were cared for in acute hospitals and classified as general surgery cases, pushing up the death rate.

Pontefract General Infirmary, whose death rate was the highest in the country, said a mistaken figure of 32 deaths had been recorded. The actual number of deaths was nine, which, compared with an expected figure of 10.57 based on the ages of the patients it treats, would have given it one of the lowest death rates in the country. Managers could not explain the error.

"Looking at the three hospitals in our patch, there are clear reasons why they are in the bottom 10 per cent, which don't necessarily show that they are poor hospitals," a spokesman for Yorkshire regional health authority said.

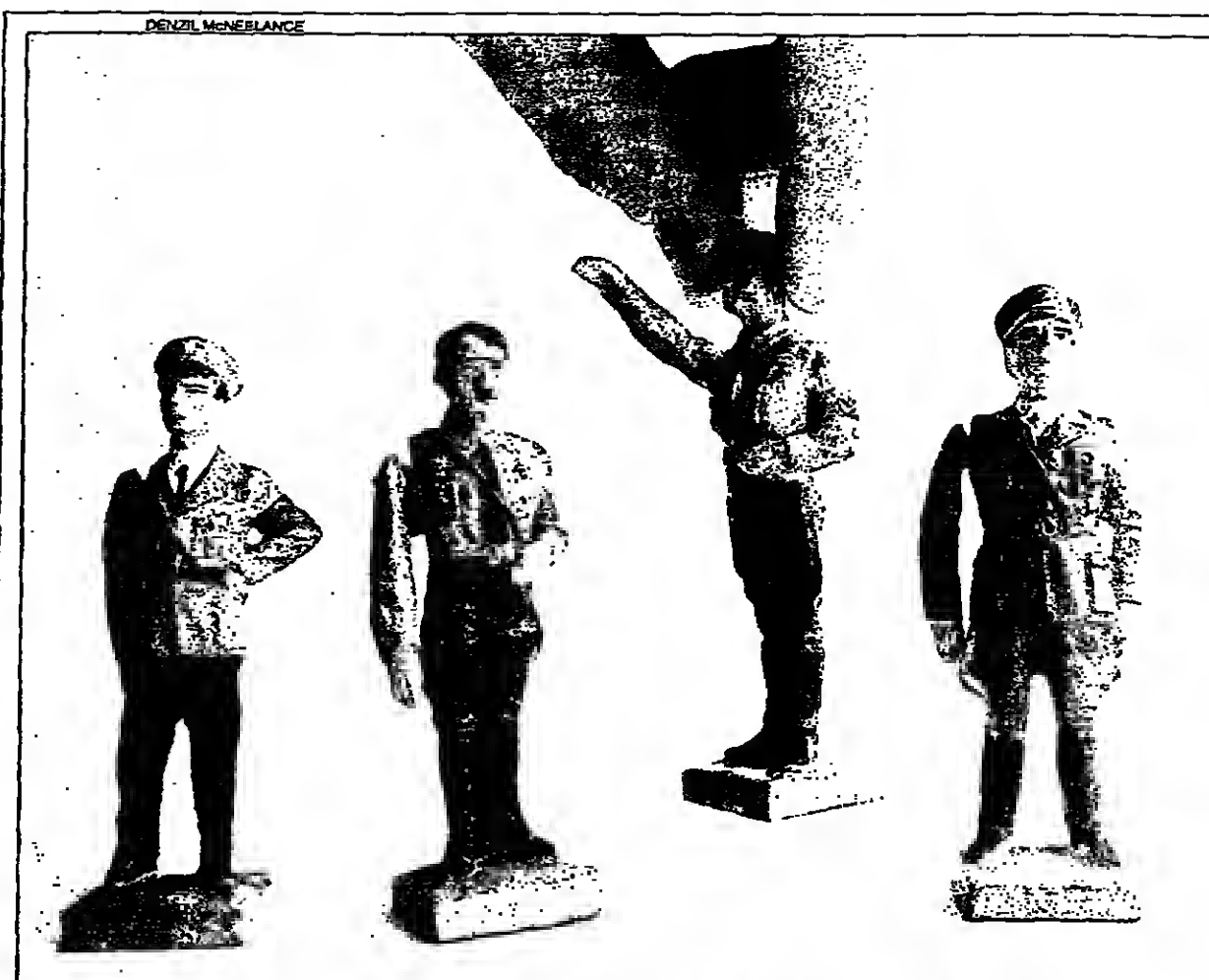
Julie-Anne Wales, surgical business manager at the Prin-

cess Margaret Hospital in Swindon, whose death rate was 50 per cent above that expected, said: "We have a busy accident and emergency department and we are next to the M4."

David Symes, an NHS management consultant who has eight years' experience of working with performance indicators for health authorities, said managers tended to dismiss the indicators because the information was wrong, out of date or explained by local factors. But in 20 per cent of cases they disclosed something that managers did not know before.

The British Medical Association said it was concerned about information being inaccurate or open to misinterpretation and causing unnecessary worry to patients. "We can't all get on our bikes and go to Southampton (the hospital with the lowest death rate)," a spokesman said.

Thomas Sutcliffe, page 16
Leading article, page 17



Toy tyrants: left to right, Goebbels, Hitler, Hess and Goering sold for prices ranging from £132 to £1,320

Miniature Nazis go quietly

By SARAH JANE CHECKLAND
ART MARKET
CORRESPONDENT

A RARE sale of Nazi memorabilia attracted anonymous private collectors to Phillips in London yesterday, although a toy figure of Hitler in a stormtrooper's uniform fetched only £132.

In the 1930s, the mass produced toys were popular with German schoolboys. Now, the stigma surrounding all things Nazi means they rarely appear on the market. Sotheby's and Christie's refuse to sell them; Phillips has no such misgivings and reaped the benefits of this largely underground market.

A model of Rudolf Hess fetched £1,320 (including premium); a 70mm (3in) figure of Goebbels in party uniform sold for £286; and Goering without baton standing, movable saluting arm, fetched £410.

Hitler failed to match these prices because of his comparatively frequent appearances on the market. The four private collectors who bought the models asked not to be named.

DEATHS IN GENERAL SURGERY 1990-1

The table shows death rates in general surgery for adult patients under 65, where 100 is the expected rate based on the age of patients treated. The Pontefract at the top of the table has a rate 95 per cent above that expected and SW Hampshire at the bottom has a rate only 29 per cent (less than one third) of that expected. No data available for Rugby, Solihull and Chorley.

District	Value above or below index of 100	District	Value above or below index of 100
Pontefract	195.53	N Manchester	100.19
Waltham Forest	193.75	S Derbyshire	99.82
Grimsby	191.32	Hull	97.89
Tower Hamlets	180.30	Liverpool	97.45
Doncaster	174.28	West Yorkshire	97.28
Tameside	173.10	E Hertfordshire	96.97
Newham	173.02	Bromsgrove	96.85
Haringey	169.48	W Lambeth	96.07
E Birmingham	166.78	N Tyneside	94.29
Nottingham	163.97	Blackburn	94.01
Cheltenham	161.80	W Norfolk	91.40
Scunthorpe	161.35	Croydon	91.00
Barnsley	159.81	Huddersfield	90.18
Wolverhampton	158.01	SW Durham	90.01
Sandwell	156.97	S Lincolnshire	89.59
W Essex	155.19	Satop	89.50
Burnley	155.00	Stockport	89.48
Swindon	150.64	Hastings	89.01
Centrl Notts	144.79	Bolton	88.06
Warrington	144.59	Walsfield	87.54
N Staffordshire	143.68	S Cambridgeshire	86.47
E Yorks	143.26	N Bedfordshire	85.63
Blackpool & Wyre	143.05	E Berkshire	85.26
Rotherham	142.56	W Lancashire	85.05
W Birmingham	142.21	Cheshire	84.36
Southern	142.10	Frenchay	83.99
Portsmouth	139.01	Triford	83.76
S Tyneside	138.68	Centrl Birmingham	82.89
N Warwickshire	138.20	Lewisham	82.06
City & Hackney	136.17	Northumberland	81.69
M Staffordshire	135.47	Wandsworth	81.46
Sheffield	135.07	Isle of Wight	80.80
Walsall	134.56	Kingston & Esher	78.48
Exeter	133.55	E Dorset	78.18
N Tyneside	132.75	NW Surrey	78.17
Great Yarmouth	132.54	Malden	78.02
S Birmingham	132.25	SW Hertfordshire	77.45
N Derbyshire	132.01	SE Kent	77.17
Torbay	130.49	Mersey & Sutton	76.97
Hampstead	130.47	Bradford	76.88
Scarborough	129.99	Newcastle	76.40
Redbridge	129.98	South	74.58
NW Durham	129.37	Kent	73.36
NE Essex	128.33	Basingstoke	73.10
Canterbury	127.47	Greenwich	72.18
Enfield	127.41	E Dorset	72.03
York	126.86	Plymouth	71.34
Darlington	125.79	Gloucester	71.75
Turnbridge Wells	125.15	Exeter	71.72
Wigan	124.51	Cardiff	71.36
Kidderminster	124.17	W Cumbria	70.72
Leeds E	124.15	Eastbourne	70.27
N Hertfordshire	123.24	Lancaster	70.13
S Hertfordshire	122.20	Milton Keynes	70.08
Worcester	122.42	Northampton	69.48
Conwy	122.34	Northallerton	68.08
Coventry	120.89	Basingstoke	67.85
N Lincolnshire	119.96	Exeter	65.36
Cambridge	119.53	South Sefton	65.10
Dorset	119.31	Mid Surrey	65.10
Bury	119.10	Mid Downs	63.91
Gateshead	118.12	Southend	63.14
Salford	117.74	Bolton	61.25
Barnet	116.15	Bloomsbury	60.34
Enfield	114.88	Salisbury	59.89
E Birmingham	113.67	Hendon	57.98
Worcester	113.20	E Suffolk	57.86
S Warwickshire	112.73	Dartford	57.40
E Surrey	112.37	W Surrey	56.84
W Berkshire	112.30	Wycombe	56.70
Harrowgate	111.86	Notwich	56.40
Sunderland	111.27	Preston	54.88
SE Staffordshire	111.21	Parkside	54.74
W Suffolk	110.09	Hartlepool	54.09
Peterborough	109.95	S Tyneside	53.73
Somerset	109.21	SW Surrey	52.83
Oldham	108.62	N Devon	52.23
Medway	108.50	Hatton	52.12
Bristol & Weston	108.20	Aylesbury	51.67
S Bedfordshire	106.09	Walsfield	51.65
Crewe	105.59	Richmond	50.15
Durham	105.38	Leeds W	49.75
Wirral	104.87	Mid Essex	49.36
Rochdale	103.23	Centrl Manchester	48.70
Huddersfield	103.02	Southport	47.94
NW Hertfordshire	102.80	Hillingdon	46.86
Canterbury	102.54	Oxfordshire	46.50
St Helens	102.12	Worthing	46.40
Hounslow	102.08	Dewsbury	37.35
Islington	101.86	Chichester	35.15
Arlesey	101.11	Winchester	34.81
Harrow	100.86	SW Hampshire	29.01
Riverside	100.30		

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Private schools struggle as boarding drops 6%

By JOHN O'LEARY
EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

INDEPENDENT schools yesterday announced the biggest slump in boarding for more than a decade as they struggled to ride out the recession.

Although the number of day pupils remained almost constant, boarding numbers declined by more than 6 per cent compared with 1992. An overall drop of almost 7,000 pupils at 1,343 schools was the biggest in the 11 years that national statistics have been collected.

David Woodhead, the national director of the Independent Schools Information Service, said that he had expected the 1.5 per cent decline to be much greater.

"Independent schools have once again surprised many both within and outside the sector by their remarkable resilience in the face of the worst economic conditions since the last war."

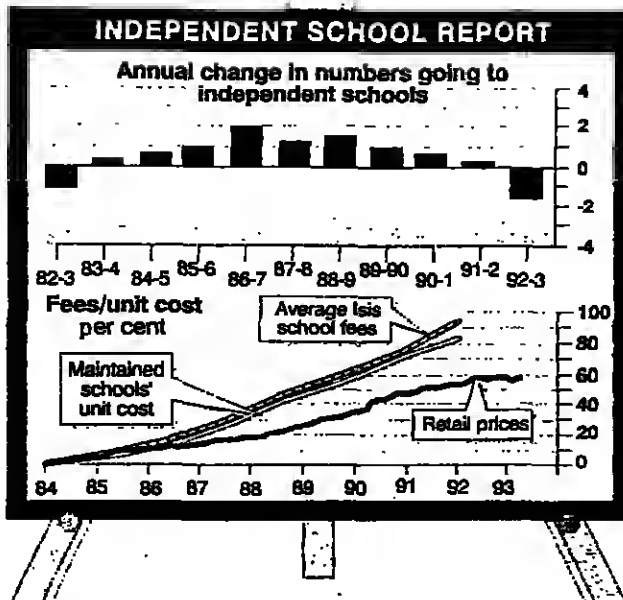
Parents were prepared to make sacrifices to ensure educational stability for their children. Many had given up expensive holidays and moved to cheaper homes to pay for private education for their sons and daughters in the teeth of the longest recession Britain has faced since the 1930s.

Fees rose by an average 8.3 per cent, the lowest increase in a decade although still well ahead of inflation. Michael Oakham, the chairman of the bursars' association, said that fee levels were largely dictated by teachers' pay settlements. Rises over several years had followed the pattern of state school costs.

The bursars forecast an average fee rise of 4-5 per cent in the autumn. Although teachers have been awarded a pay increase of only 1.5 per cent, the independent school pay bill is expected to rise by up to 7 per cent.

More than 25 per cent of the 465,627 pupils are receiving help with their fees, mainly through bursaries or scholarships provided by the schools themselves. This year's census also shows a 3.4 per

■ Independent schools remain optimistic despite registering the biggest decline in boarding since records began



cent increase in the number supported by the government's assisted places scheme.

Mr Oakley said schools were shifting money originally intended for capital projects to support pupils whose parents ran into financial difficulties. Most liked the better social balance achieved by offering support for more pupils.

The main blackspot for the schools continues to be in the take-up of boarding places, which has been declining steadily for 20 years. Once again, prep schools have been most seriously hit. In two years, the number of eight-year-olds taking full board has

dropped by almost a third. Mr Woodhead said the recession had accelerated a long-term decline in boarding, which had sociological roots. Prep schools were bearing the brunt as parents postponed the point at which their children started boarding.

Joan Jefferson, the headmistress of St Swithun's School, Winchester, and president of the Girls' Schools Association, said: "I do not think that boarding is in terminal decline. It is in a process of change, with more parents choosing schools close to home and opting for weekly boarding. As the country comes out of recession, board-

ing numbers overall may well increase."

However, the Isis report says many schools are already considering rationalising their provision, with some concentrating entirely on day pupils. There had been few closures of boarding schools, but a number had merged with neighbours.

The education department has registered 79 independent school closures in the last year, but 74 new schools have opened.

A decade in which independent schools took a growing share of all pupils came to an end in 1990 and is still declining slightly. The picture varies substantially at different stages, however. Almost one in five sixth-formers throughout England is in an independent school, for example, as is one in six of secondary school pupils in London and the South East.

The biggest points of growth in the last year have been in foreign students and those of pre-school age, although girls' schools have also recorded an overall increase in day pupils. Almost 6,000 foreign pupils represented the largest increase for several years, more than offsetting a drop in the children of Britons living abroad and bringing in £130 million in foreign currency.

The schools hope that healthy rises in the number of children attending pre-prep departments will carry through into later age groups as parents seek stability for their sons and daughters. At present, however, there is unprecedented movement in and out of independent education.

Mr Woodhead said: "Parents are acting pragmatically. Whenever there is a natural break, they are looking at what is on offer locally."

Head teachers at the publication of the census yesterday all reported increases in applications for the coming year. Mr Woodhead said: "All the signs are good for the long term, and we are already beginning to see some of our very own green shoots."

Leading article, page 17

Boycott of testing backed by heads

By JOHN O'LEARY
EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

INDEPENDENT school heads yesterday gave their support to teachers' demands for a suspension of this year's classroom tests and questioned the need for national assessment at 14.

Robin Wilson, the head of Trinity School, Croydon, and chairman of the Headmasters' Conference, which includes many of the leading public schools, said: "Our sympathies are very much with the teaching profession. We agree the tests should be suspended."

Few of the leading independent schools will be taking the most controversial tests, those for 14-year-olds in English and technology. Most will continue to administer their own end-of-year examinations.

Even the more established tests for seven-year-olds will be taken by only half of the eligible independent schools. Bryan Maybee, the headmaster of Mount School, Bromsgrove, said that the early primary school curriculum was too prescriptive, and teachers should be allowed to concentrate on basic literacy and numeracy.

Mr Wilson repeated a view he expressed in a letter to *The Times* last week that a single method of testing could not satisfy the government's requirements to be both diagnostic and capable of ranking schools. He said that independent schools shared the growing perception that the quality of state education was improving, and added: "At 14, I cannot see for well-run schools what tests are there for."

Eric Forth, the schools minister, stepped up the government's campaign to save the tests in a statement drawing attention to new evidence from the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit of low standards among school-leavers.



Last stand: one woman and her dog enjoy the splendour of Oxleas Wood

Brussels challenges road route

By MICHAEL HORNSBY AND TOM WALKER

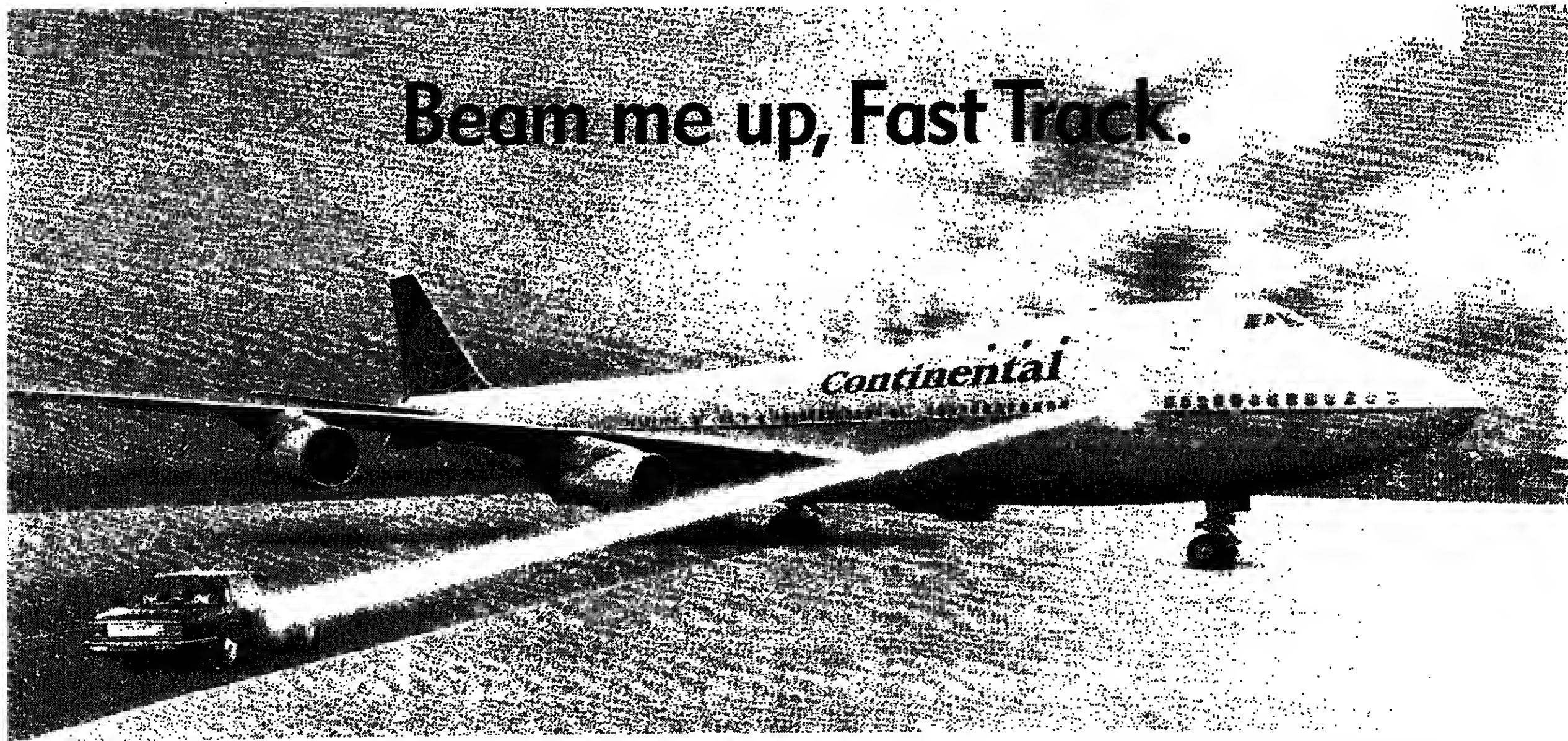
BRITAIN was yesterday given two months to justify building a four-lane highway through the last remaining fragment of ancient woodland around London or face prosecution before the European Court of Justice.

The ultimatum from the European Commission came after months of lobbying by conservationists and residents who are trying to halt the building of the road. It is the strongest legal challenge so far issued by Brussels to a planning decision of this kind.

The proposed road, part of a scheme known

as the East London River Crossing, would span the Thames via a new bridge at Woolwich and then pass through the eastern corner of Oxleas Wood, an 8,000-year-old patch of forest on the slopes of Shooter's Hill at Eltham in southeast London. The wood is a designated site of special scientific interest.

Brussels contends that the government has failed to carry out a proper assessment of the environmental impact of the scheme as required under a European Community directive in force since July 1988.



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Tourists reject hotels for freedom of self-catering

By HARVEY ELLIOTT, TRAVEL CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH holidaymakers are turning increasingly to self-catering. Only half the four million summer holidays booked so far this year are in hotels, with 44 per cent in self-catering accommodation and 6 per cent taking airline seats only.

Three years ago, 62 per cent of bookings were for hotels and cruise ships that included meals. By the summer peak, self-catering is expected to have overtaken inclusive hotel holidays.

The trend is causing alarm in the trade. Ian Smith, managing director of Lunn Poly, which produced the figures yesterday at the Association of British Travel Agents convention in Palma, Majorca, said: "People are becoming far more sophisticated and prefer to cook for themselves or eat out in restaurants. They feel they are getting better value for money and do not want meals at set times in a hotel dining-room any more."

Many small hotels in the Mediterranean have closed and reopened as self-catering apartments. A law has been

passed in Majorca, after pressure from hoteliers, limiting the number of people who can stay in one apartment room. From next year, children over 12 will not be able to share a room with their parents and each apartment block will be licensed to accommodate a set number of people per room.

British tour operators believe the Majorcan authorities may discover that the rule is impossible to administer and that, if it were successful,

tourists would switch to other destinations. Majorca is the most popular destination for British tourists and has taken up 12 per cent of holidays already booked. The island is followed by Florida with 8 per cent and Greece and Turkey with 6 per cent each.

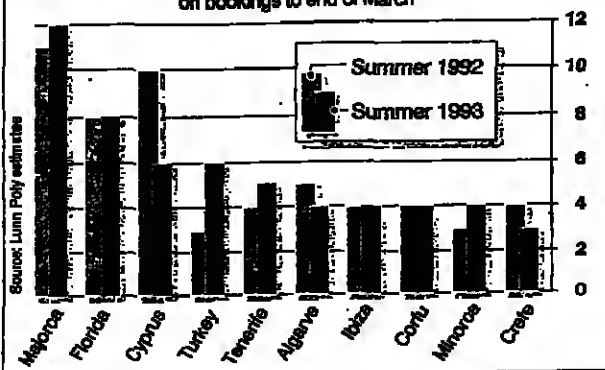
Holiday bookings are soaring and the big travel agency chains are competing to acquire prime sites for their premises. Agencies are taking over from building societies as

the most common sight in Britain's high streets.

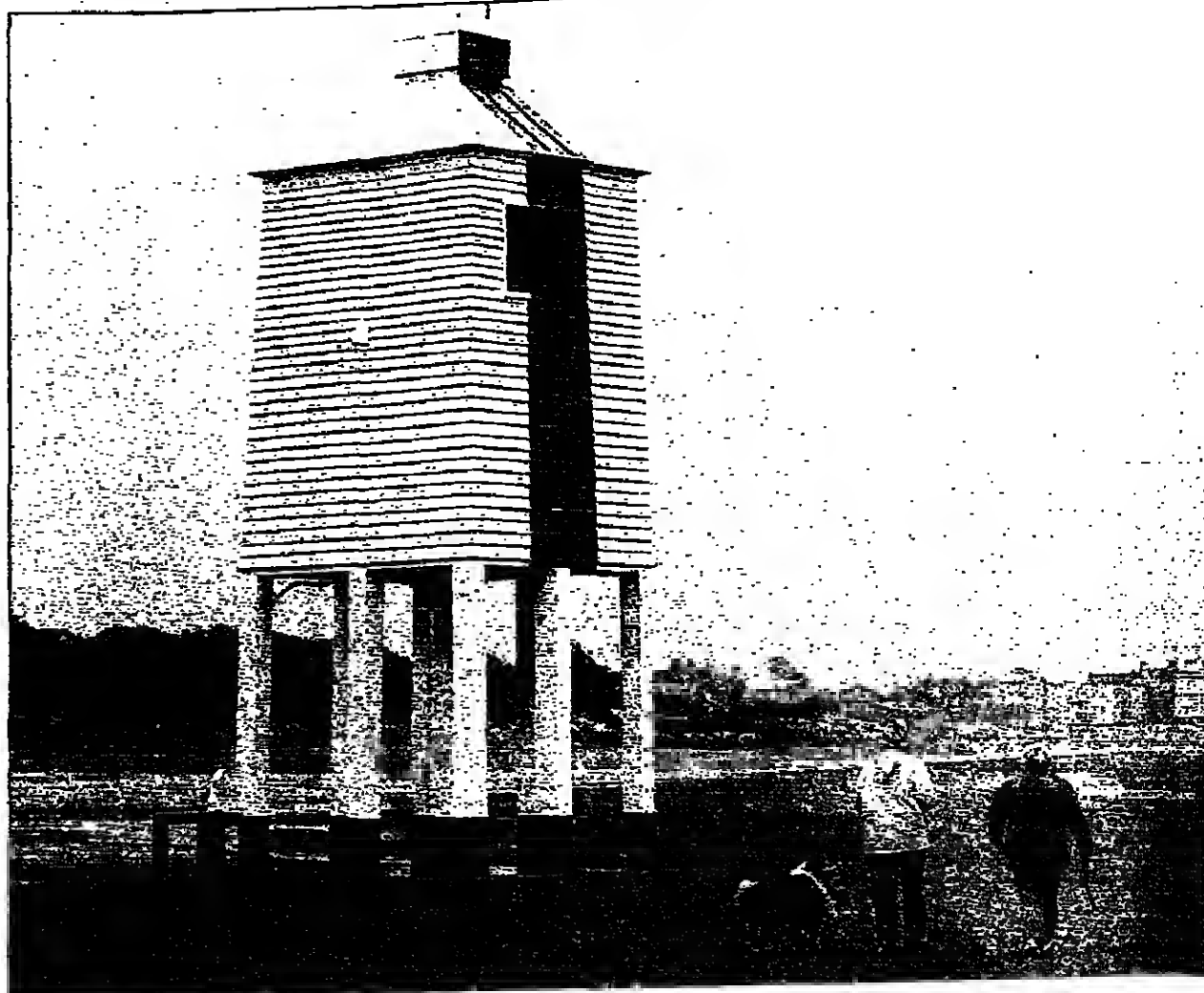
Lunn Poly, the biggest travel retailer with 623 shops, plans to open two more each week over the next year, creating 500 jobs, and to maintain its discount policy to keep its market share. Rivals such as Pickfords and Thomas Cook are fighting to keep pace, with hundreds of new shops in the final phases of fitting out or negotiation. Many will be equipped with video equipment to let customers see film of destinations and hotels before they book.

The rivalry between the giants is keeping prices down, enabling the 11 million people who will take package tours this year to obtain discounts throughout the summer peak. But many smaller agents told the convention of their difficulties in keeping up with the big chains. Profits are little more than 1 per cent of turnover. The average price of a two-week package holiday sold by Lunn Poly is £414, 1 per cent down on last year's £418 and £1 below the 1991 average.

TOP TEN SUMMER DESTINATIONS
Percentage of total holiday market based on bookings to end of March



Brighter future looms for retired lighthouse



Shining example: the nine-legged lower lighthouse at Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset, is to be brought back into service after standing redundant for 25 years.

The 160-year-old wooden lighthouse, which guided ships into Bridgwater until it was closed down in 1967, is to be renovated and working by the end of the year.

Built in 1832, it worked in

tandem with Burnham's upper lighthouse, which it is now replacing as it is no longer needed for modern navigation, and will be used by local marine traffic.

The only one of its kind in Britain, the grade 1 listed building will be fully automated as part of a cost-cutting programme to automate fully the remaining 38 manned lighthouses by 1997.

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Hoover books way out of flight fiasco

By IAN MURRAY

HOOVER yesterday announced that it had negotiated a "comprehensive" range of flights on 1,100 services to Europe and America for the tens of thousands of customers who have claimed free flights in the company's over-subscribed promotion offer.

But the company, which is spending £20 million to try to meet its obligations under the terms of the promotion, is not prepared to say how many customers are claiming flights, which airlines they are using or what are the details of the schedule.

Nigel Griffiths, Labour's consumer affairs spokesman, said last night that he was writing to Michael Heseltine, President of the Board of Trade, demanding that government inspectors be allowed to monitor the rescue package. "Only last week, Hoover were trying to charge £25 to all those flying to Orlando," he said. "In my view, this puts into question their professional competence to come to grips with the travel disaster of the decade."

Richard Rankin, the American brought in as vice-president of European marketing services after the promotion backfired, promised yesterday that the new schedule "enables us to offer flights to all customers entitled to travel under the terms of the promotion". He said the £20 million rescue fund set up by Maytag Corpo-

ration, Hoover's American parent company, would be used to charter aircraft and block book seats.

But many of those who want to travel during the peak holiday months of July and August are likely to be disappointed. To find what air industry sources estimate are about 45,000 trans-Atlantic seats and 25,000 European bookings, Hoover has bought up existing spare capacity. This is largely available in the early summer and autumn, but not during the two peak months.

Buying such a large number of seats has proved extremely difficult. Virgin Atlantic has refused to sell any, although it will be carrying some Hoover passengers through bookings made by agencies specialising in consolidating block bookings. British Airways is understood to be carrying 17,000 of the 20,000 passengers who have opted to go to New York. Unijet Leisure International is expected to be flying between 20,000 and 25,000 to Orlando and 11,000 of the 25,000 who have chosen one of the five European destinations.

The tickets are likely to cost Hoover between £200 and £250 for the Atlantic flights and between £120 and £200 for European destinations.

Customers wanting to check their tickets should contact Hoover's helpline on 0685 373344 in working hours.

CHAMPIONSHIP CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

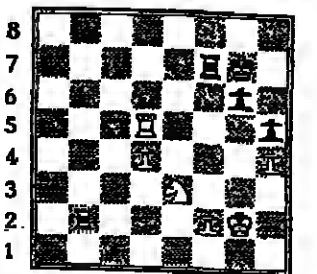
Nigel Short's victory in his recent match against the Dutchman Jan Timman, gave him the right to challenge Garry Kasparov for the world title.

Today's game is from a crucial stage of the match. The score before this game was 4 points each, but this victory enabled Nigel to forge ahead, and ultimately triumph.

White: Jan Timman
Black: Nigel Short
Candidates Final, El Escorial
Game 9, February 1993

Ray Lopez
1 e4 e5
2 Nf3 Nc6
3 Bb5 a6
4 Bxc6 Qxc6
5 O-O Qc7
6 Nxe5 Qe6
7 Qh5 g6
8 Qg5 Bg7
9 Nd3 f5

Diagram of final position



10 e5 c5
11 b3 h6
12 Qg3 f4
13 Qf3 Bf5
14 Qd7 Be4
15 Qc7 Bxc3
16 Qxc3 Bxc3
17 Qb7 Rb3
18 Qxa8 f3
19 Nc3 fxc2
20 Re1 O-O
21 Qe4+ Rf7
22 Nd1 Qxa1
23 Qxc5 Qxc5
24 Rxc5 Nc6
25 Rxc5 Nc4
26 Bc3 Nc3
27 Rf6 Rxa3
28 Rf6 Rxa2
29 Rxc3 Kf7
30 Ne3 Rf5
31 Kg2 Rf5
32 Rd4 Rf5
33 Bc4 Rf5
34 Rf4 Rf7
35 Rg4 Rf7
36 f4 h5
37 Rg5 Rf4
38 d4 Rf7
39 Rf5 Rf2
White resigns

Winning Move, Page 40

Legal aid dispute

Lawyers fear flood of DIY divorces will swamp courts

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

LAWYERS are predicting that government curbs on legal aid will bring a flood of DIY divorces, leading to long delays for obtaining a decree and a sharp rise in court disputes over children and maintenance.

Leading practitioners from the Solicitors' Family Law Association say that the recent withdrawal by the Lord Chancellor of "green form" legal aid advice for all except those on income support will have disastrous knock-on effects for people seeking divorce.

Although green-form advice is not available for obtaining the divorce petition itself, solicitors have used the scheme for both preparing the petition and advising on settlements over children and maintenance. James Pirrie, of the

London firm Russell Jones & Walker, said: "We have found the divorce registry increasingly pedantic over the fine detail of much of the paperwork. Solicitors are finding it difficult enough to process the necessary papers to obtain a divorce — if we can't get it right, I think many members of the public will find it completely impossible."

The withdrawal of green-form advice, which helped well over 200,000 people with their divorces in 1991-2, coincides with what some solicitors see as an increasingly strict attitude at the divorce registry that forms are 100 per cent accurate. "Orders are sent back on semantics — you might get a financial order returned because the grammar isn't right," Mr Pirrie

said. "All this to-ing and fro-ing slows the process down and costs increasing sums of money: when people who used to qualify for green form are handling divorce themselves, the whole system will be brought to a standstill."

Another likely outcome, he says, is that wives who depend on a good maintenance settlement will lose out. "They will get the maintenance set by the Child Support Agency, which hides the fact that they are not getting any maintenance for themselves until the time comes when the children reach 16 and they are on their own."

Sara Robinson, spokesman for the association, warned of the likely delays in obtaining a decree once people started doing their own divorces, with court staff having to spend more time on advice. "The result will be a lot more court time and expense for the taxpayer. People will decide they can't afford legal fees and will be pressed into doing their own divorces. They will find, particularly in London, that the divorce registry is not particularly user-friendly and there are not the range of explanatory leaflets that people will need."

Another family lawyer, Naomi Angell, of Bindman & Partners, agreed there would be a rise in court actions, with a resulting increase in legal aid costs. "We all hope to avoid litigation by negotiating as much as possible beforehand. The whole climate has been towards mediation and conciliation rather than to increase conflict. But if solicitors are no longer able to do this for people, it will increase stress for families and there will be more disputes."

Desmond O'Donnell, also with Bindmans, said the process for obtaining an undefended divorce was time-consuming. "People do need advice on them: there are several forms involved, the petition and statement of arrangements [for the children], the application for exemption of fees... these go to the court and you get back the acknowledgement-of-service form. Then the petitioner must complete an affidavit in support of the petition and an application for directions for trial."

To pay privately for legal advice on a divorce would cost about £100 an hour, a total of between £250 and £300, he said. If people managed to successfully divorce on their own, the cost would be £59.50.

Prison chief urges transfer of women

By RICHARD FORD, HOME AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

TOP SECURITY women prisoners, including convicted IRA terrorists, should be moved from a special unit at Durham jail and allowed to serve sentences closer to their homes, according to a report published today.

The report by Judge Tumim, chief inspector of prisons, is also critical of the government for allowing a blind woman to be held in the wing, many miles from her family in Yorkshire.

Kenneth Clarke, the home secretary, rejected a call by Judge Tumim for the women's wing at the jail to be closed and greater use made of Holloway women's prison in north London. He said: "Holloway does not have Category A accommodation and the required changes would disrupt the regime of the prison as well as require expenditure that would not offer value for money."

The judge's report suggests that some women were sent to Durham's H wing to make up the numbers and provide company for three Category A prisoners, including Martina Anderson and Ella O'Dwyer, IRA terrorists serving life sentences for their part in the plot to bomb 12 British seaside resorts in 1985.

The 16 women held in H wing, the only unit in the country with cells for Category A female prisoners, complained that they suffered verbal abuse from male inmates in the early hours of the morning. All inmates' movements were subject to restrictions for top-security prisoners, although only three were in that category.

The report says: "It was difficult to see why some of the women were felt to require the level of physical security provided." Judge Tumim could find no justification for a blind woman being sent to Durham, when her elderly parents, who lived near York, found it impossible to reach the jail but could have visited her at Askham Grange, North Yorkshire.

The report says that although the overall provision for women prisoners in H wing is good, none of them came from the Durham area and all felt they could be held in a jail nearer their homes. Several of the women came from London and the Home Counties, which made family visits difficult and expensive.

Anderson and O'Dwyer have applied for a long-term temporary transfer to Northern Ireland. Their applications, with those of 12 other Northern Irish prisoners, are being considered by the government.

Anderson married Paul Kavanagh, serving 35 years of his part in the IRA's 1981 bombing campaign, in 1988.

Illegal poisoning hampers rare kite's recovery in Britain

By MICHAEL HORNSBY
AGRICULTURE
CORRESPONDENT

RED kites, once common in the skies of Britain but now among the country's rarest birds, are making a slow recovery, despite continued illegal poisoning.

The latest victim died after eating a rabbit laced with pesticide at Sandy, Bedfordshire, where the Royal Society for the Protection of

Birds (RSPB), has its HQ, the society reported yesterday. The bird was one of 20 released last year by the RSPB and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee as part of a programme to reintroduce the fork-tailed predators to England and Scotland, where they were persecuted to extinction before the end of the last century.

At the lowest point in their fortunes, the birds were reduced to a handful of breeding pairs in the

upper Towy valley in Dyfed. The latest count puts the British population at 84 breeding pairs, 79 of them in Wales, four in southern England and one in northern Scotland.

Roy Walker, the head of the conservation committee, said: "At least seven of the birds we have released have died as a result of illegal poisoning, which is by far the most important cause of mortality, accounting for nearly 70 per cent of

recorded deaths. It would be a tragedy if such killing jeopardised the success of this international venture."

Since the reintroduction began four years ago, 53 red kites have been released in England and 69 in Scotland. The birds were imported from Spain and Sweden as well as Wales. Last summer, red kites bred in England for the first time in more than a hundred years, producing nine fledglings. The nest sites are

being kept secret for fear of raids by egg collectors.

Kites like wooded country and prey on rabbits, voles and field mice. They are also scavengers of carrion, which puts them at risk from gamekeepers and farmers to kill foxes and crows. The entire world population is not thought to exceed 13,000 pairs, the biggest numbers being in France, Germany, Spain and Sweden.



By royal command: the Duke of York, admitting his sea legs were a little wobbly after a year of landlubbing, took over his first warship yesterday. He was greeted by the 40 fellow officers and crew of HMS *Cottesmore*, a 625-ton minehunter, at Portsmouth. The 33-year-old lieutenant commander acknowledged that such a command was highly

sought after in a shrinking navy. "The greatest ambition of any officer is to command his own ship," *Cottesmore*, which has a hull of glass-reinforced plastic to avoid detonating a mine, will spend the next six weeks on sea training. The Duke follows the lead of the Prince of Wales, who commanded the minesweeper HMS *Bronington*.

Debt-laden ENO puts musicals on agenda

By ALISON ROBERTS
ARTS REPORTER

THE new leadership team at English National Opera yesterday unveiled its strategy to increase audience numbers as the company faces its worst financial crisis.

Dennis Marks, who takes over from Peter Jonas as the general director in July, said that the recession was to blame for a 6 per cent fall in attendance and a consequent deficit of £1 million on last year. The company's accumulated deficit now stands at £2.3 million.

Slan Edwards, the new music director, said that the company was considering staging musicals and musical comedies as well as traditional opera. This would broaden the audience and return the Coliseum, the ENO's permanent home in central London, to its diverse theatrical past.

Mr Marks, former head of music programmes at the BBC, launched a populist 1993-4 season.

Wagner returns to ENO's repertoire after eight years with the first new production of *Lohengrin* since 1971. Jonathan Miller also makes a comeback after retiring from opera several times, producing *Der Rosenkavalier* by Richard Strauss.

The new regime at ENO hope that the seven new productions next season — including new versions of *La Bohème* by Puccini, which launches a Puccini cycle, and Mozart's *Così fan tutte* — will herald a period of renewal.

ENO continues to be strongly associated with the composer Leo Janáček and launches a series of his work with *Jenůfa*, directed by the up-and-coming young director Lucy Bailey.

Ms Edwards will also conduct the premiere of *Blond Eckbert* by Judith Weir — a new composer who took the operatic world by storm with her last opera, *A Night of the Chinese Opera*.

Arts, page 29

NEWS IN BRIEF

Concrete block killer given life

A man was jailed for life at the Old Bailey for murdering a woman by dropping a concrete block on her head in a derelict garage. Gordon Sneddon, 25, of Banersea, south London, lived with his secret for ten weeks then, posing as a witness, led police to the body of Donna Tomlinson, 37, of Camberwell, south London.

John Bevan, for the prosecution, said Miss Tomlinson met Sneddon in a park last July and took him to her home.

Sneddon told police they went to the garage for sex after a long drinking session. Afterwards "something came into my head" and he hit her.

Heath honour

Sir Edward Heath, prime minister from 1970-1, has been awarded one of Germany's top honours, the Great Cross of Merit with Star and Sash, for taking Britain into the EC in 1972 and promoting Anglo-German ties.

Ship saved

Gary Morse, 26, of North Shields, Tyne and Wear, helped to save his father's trawler from sinking by plugging a leak in the hull with his fist while lying in 2h of water in the engine room until help arrived.

Reward posted

The parents of Joanna Parrish, a 20-year-old student found strangled in the river Yonne at Auxerre in France three years ago, have posted a £5,000 reward to find her killer.

Drying out

A £45 million flood barrier across the river Yare at Great Yarmouth has been approved by flood prevention authorities in Norfolk and Suffolk.

Chief chosen

Paul Whitehouse, 48, deputy chief constable of West Yorkshire, has been appointed chief constable of Sussex.

Role of guide dogs confuses the public

By RICHARD DUCE

MISCONCEPTIONS about the role of guide dogs for the blind are disclosed in a national survey published today. Some people believe the dogs can tell the time and others think motorists should flash their lights to signal that they should cross the road.

The survey was commissioned by the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association to mark today's second International Guide Dog Day. A spokeswoman for the association said yesterday: "This survey has proved the need for people to be re-educated."

The following statistics emerged from the survey, based on interviews carried out last month with 537 people.

□ 92 per cent believe the guide dog decides when its owner crosses the road. In fact it is the owner who decides.

□ 39 per cent think that the owner of a guide dog will not need assistance. Few people realise that if the dog's harness is lowered the owner would appreciate help.

□ 35 per cent believe they can stroke or talk to a guide dog. In fact a working dog should never be distracted.

□ 33 per cent think it acceptable to feed tidbits to a guide dog. The dog has a balanced diet and overfeeding could affect the way it behaves and works.

□ Only 41 per cent know that they should continue driving if they see a guide-dog owner waiting to cross the road. More than 50 per cent think they should sound the horn or even stop the car and wave them across. Two per cent would even flash their headlights.

□ 70 per cent know that if a dog owner needs assistance an arm should be offered for them to take.

The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association first began training dogs in 1931 and today there are 4,100 owners. The association also organises holidays for clients, teaches braille to blind people and carries out veterinary research into dog health.

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Minister rejects MPs' fears over rail sell-off

By TIM JONES AND JONATHAN PRYNN

THE government yesterday refused to bow to pressure to slow down its plans to privatise the railways, in spite of cross-party warnings that the programme could go badly wrong.

The all-party Commons transport committee said that, because the plans were novel and untested, "the risk that something could go badly wrong is therefore higher than would otherwise be the case". The committee, which had previously claimed the proposals could jeopardise the integrity of the passenger network, says that privatisation could lead to line closures, reduced services and legal battles.

To counter the dangers of what it describes as "an experiment without parallel", the committee's report says the government must enforce strict service standards and controls to protect passengers against the misuse of monopoly power and fare increases. It also demands evaluation of the performance of the first franchisees before full implementation of the proposals.

Roger Freeman, the transport minister, rejected the committee's criticism that the government should take longer to test the practicability of franchising services. However, he emphasised that the government would be "cautious" in introducing privatisation, although he said that 50 companies and 30 management staff buy-out teams had shown interest.

"We are responding to market interests. We are not forcing anything down anyone's throats. We can't rush this. You can't push a piece of string, there has to be a response."

According to the report, the complexity of the proposed arrangements and the many uncertainties faced by private railway operators could mean the cost to the taxpayers of providing the same level of service may rise.

It also calls for John MacGregor, the transport secretary, to prove that he has no "hidden agenda" for closing lines or reducing services by amending the decision to cut the railway subsidy by half from £1 billion over the next two years to a "more realistic level". Mr Freeman insisted that "there is no reason why any service should close as a result of franchising", although he accepted that clo-

sure could result from lack of demand.

The report says: "Investment will be the key determinant of the success or failure of the government's proposals. The sharp drop in planned investment for 1993-4, coupled with the uncertainty generated by the government's proposals, have led to a crisis of orders and confidence in the railway supply industry."

In spite of its detailed reservations, the committee is less savage about the privatisation plans than it was in its interim report, which led to accusations that Robert Adley, the chairman, was unrepresentative of Tory backbench opinion.

Since then, Mr MacGregor has announced the seven lines, including three InterCity routes, which could be in private hands by next April, although the first franchised routes are not expected to be running until late 1994. Although the committee's 11 members say the government is right to search for ways of improving the service, they warn that any franchisees will have to be given more powers to control the management and infrastructure if they are to maintain their interest.

The report says that potential franchisees for passenger services could be deterred unless it is made clear that open access to any other operator on the lines for which they have bid would be severely restricted. However, it says that open access for freight should be introduced as soon as possible.

And it says that further assurances are needed from the government on such matters as the universal availability of discounted fare schemes, cross-validity of tickets and the publication of a national timetable.



Freeman: responding to market interests

Government pressed to call early election

By NICHOLAS WOOD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

JOHN Major is being urged by senior ministerial colleagues to prepare now for a general election in as little as two years.

Two conflicting approaches have already emerged among Tory strategists. While some are urging the prime minister to capitalise on the economic upturn confirmed on Monday, others say that such a strategy would be open to obvious accusations of "cutting and running".

Advocates of a 1995 election are also saying that it should free the government of the inhibitions of an uncertain majority, currently down to 20 with the prospect of worse to come if the Newbury by-

election is lost and subsequent contests follow the pattern of past mid-term setbacks.

Ministers urging Mr Major to give serious attention to the merits of 1996 or 1995 rest their case primarily on the hazards of solidifying on with a declining majority. Prominent Euro-sceptics predict a bumpy ride for the government on a wide variety of fronts once Maastricht is laid to rest.

Sir Norman Fowler, the Conservative party chairman, is understood to be opposed to an early election. His officials emphasised yesterday that 1995 forms no part of Smith Square's strategic planning for regaining power.



New views of Europe: Michael Howard helping to gloss over the controversy caused by Douglas Hurd

Major acts to calm row over referendum

By PHILIP WEBSTER AND JILL SHERMAN

JOHN Major and Douglas Hurd moved yesterday to damp down the row over the foreign secretary's weekend remarks about the impact of a "no" vote in next month's Danish referendum.

In the Commons Mr Major said there had been nothing new in what Mr Hurd had said. If the Danes voted "no" for a second time all 12 EC members "would need to hold urgent consultations about what to do next". On Sunday Mr Hurd's suggestion that a "no" vote could lead to a "crisis involving Denmark's position in the Community" led to claims that Britain was reneging on its pledge to stand by the Danes.

When the issue was raised in the Commons by William Cash, a Tory Euro-sceptic, Mr Major said the government did not expect the Danes to say no. If they did, the treaty could not enter into force and the European Community "all 12 of them" would need to hold consultations. He said: "Each of these points is self-evident. That is what Mr Hurd said." Mr Hurd, questioned in Stockholm, took a similar line.

On the by-election campaign trail at Newbury yesterday Michael Howard, the environment secretary, said: "There is no question of bypassing the Danes, nor is there any question of going ahead with the Maastricht treaty without the Danes. What the foreign secretary said was that we could not rule out pushing ahead with another sort of arrangement."

Mr Howard, one of the more Euro-sceptical members of the cabinet, pointed out that there were already arrangements in the EC which did not involve all member states, such as the exchange rate mechanism.

Asked whether he thought "Black Wednesday", when Britain withdrew from the ERM, was really a black day, Mr Howard quipped: "I have never tried to paint it. I am not much of an artist myself."

Danes confident, page 13
Leading article, page 17

Smith goes shopping for votes

By JILL SHERMAN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

JOHN Smith tentatively took to the hustings yesterday for his first by-election campaign as Labour leader.

Mr Smith initially looked slightly bewildered as he was steered round cameramen and pushed in front of old ladies and young children in Newbury, on behalf of his candidate, Steve Billeliff.

His minder Peter Mandelson, MP for Hartlepool, had, it seemed, ensured that the Labour shopping centre, Newbury's pride and joy, had been cleared of hostile voters. Although the shops looked conspicuously empty, elderly women and young mothers pushing prams seemed to appear out of the woodwork, pleading their support in a town which is supposed to be a Liberal Democrat stronghold.

Mr Mandelson, adeptly guided Mr Smith from one pensioner to another, making sure that his boss had every opportunity to pat children's heads or stick Labour labels on

their sweatshirts. At one point one of the advance party quietly asked if Mr Smith could go to the "Taste of France" bakery. "Are they hostile?" Mr Mandelson murmured under his breath. "No," came the answer before Mr Smith was turned in the direction of the croissants.

The Labour leader does not have the style, panache or the string of bad jokes of his predecessor, Neil Kinnock.

Mr Kinnock excelled at walkabouts, putting down hecklers and chatting up old ladies as if he had known them all his life. Mr Smith adopted a much quieter stance, uttering "Nice to see you" at every opportunity, followed by "great" or "very good" when he was sure of support. He also suffered from not being as recognisable. At least one shopper shook his head without knowing who he was, while another said nostalgically: "There's the old Liberal leader."

Yet the kindly smile and the reassuring pat seemed to go down well. Olive Bunn, 92, summed it up: "To tell the truth I was a little bit disappointed to start with but he does things in a quiet style."

Mr Smith's first task was to place a sticker on the baseball cap of Ashley Deakin, aged 25. "I think he deserves a sticker," the Labour leader said, though we were not quite sure why.

Mr Billeliff played a minor role in yesterday morning's proceedings. At one point he interrupted a conversation with Celia Barclay about the rise in prescription charges. "Can I say hello, I am Steve Billeliff," he said. "Yes, we have met before," Mrs Barclay said. "Of course we have," Mr Billeliff said, smiling too much to be convincing.

1992 general election:
J. Chapman (C) 37,135; D. Rendell (Lib Dem) 24,778; R. Hall (L) 3,962; J. Wallis (Green) 539.
Con majority 12,357.

Whitehall 'needs code of ethics'

By MICHAEL DYNES, WHITEHALL CORRESPONDENT

A COMPREHENSIVE code of ethics is needed to help to preserve the traditional integrity of the civil service in the face of the managerial revolution sweeping Whitehall, it was claimed yesterday.

A code of ethics would provide clear guidelines for civil servants who were confronted, for example, by ministers attempting to mislead Parliament, Elizabeth Symons, the general secretary of the Association of First Division Civil Servants, said. Ms Symons was giving evidence to the House of Commons civil service select committee.

Graham Mather, president of the European Policy Forum, a free-market think tank, told the committee that Whitehall would become more efficient only when the senior policy-making elite were put on five-year contracts, paid the market rate for the job, and judged by the quality of their performance.

Bosnia policy puts Britain's special relationship to test

The Western review of policy towards Bosnia is too often glibly depicted as a clash between impetuous American idealism and cautious European realism, like a Henry James novel. There are elements of both strands, but to talk of a transatlantic clash is misleading. Rather, there is an anguished debate on both sides of the Atlantic not just about whether to use force but about the inherent limits on outside intervention. Differences are those of perspective and degree of existing involvement.

To listen to President Clinton in the past few days is not to hear a leader raring to intervene, a modern-day Teddy Roosevelt. His comments in a news conference last Friday and in subsequent interviews reflect caution and doubts.

Bosnia, he said, "clearly the most difficult foreign policy problem we and our allies face". America has a special responsibility as "the world's only superpower. We do have to lead the world."

His views of the limits on possible actions match those heard in London. "If the United States takes action, we must have a clearly defined objective that can be met, we must be able to understand it, and its limitations must be clear." The US should not become involved as a partisan in a war.

There are stronger pressures for intervention from within the Clinton administration than from either the British or French governments. The use of force is favoured by Madeleine Albright, American ambassador at the UN, by key National Security Council staff and by several officials in the State Department. In Britain, the most Thatcherite members of the cabinet are among the strongest opponents of intervention, one of the few issues where they diverge from their mentor. In both countries, defence and intelligence advisers have stressed the risks of military action.

The real transatlantic difference is in the degree of

impatience, the extent of the feeling that "something must be done." That is why Baroness Thatcher's comments two weeks ago struck such chords in America. In that respect, America has been leading the current policy review, forcing the Europeans to re-examine options which they had previously ruled out, going beyond the tightening of sanctions against Serbia which took effect yesterday.

Viewed from London, the process is the familiar one of trying to influence American policy as it is being formed, operating as a participant in the inter-agency debate in Washington. In his interview with *The Times* last week, Douglas Hurd offered a good definition of that

term the "special relationship": "what it actually means in practice is that we are involved in their thinking at an earlier stage than most people, and that they always take our advice." It means feeding in suggestions and reservations, or, as some officials would say, educating the Americans, and particularly a new administration.

The main British hope now is to ensure that Mr Clinton's decisions take account of all the factors involved, defining the strategic aim, specific targets, numbers of planes, the legal basis and, above all, the impact on the existing humanitarian efforts on the ground. Britain remains more opposed to any lifting of the arms embargo to aid the Bosnian Muslims than the latest comments by Mr Clinton suggest that any military moves will be restricted in their ambitions. They may go further than ministers in London would have liked a week or two ago, and there may be continuing reservations, but in the end, there will be no open breach with Washington, and British planes will participate in any actions.

PETER RIDDELL

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Tory heartland loses its true blue image

By JONATHAN PRYNN

FOR almost a century the red and white vote in Gloucestershire turned out in force to return successive Conservative governments to Gloucestershire Hall. But the past eight years has seen a transformation in the political landscape of the county.

While not yet the Lambeth of the west, there is a growing mood of militancy over government-imposed cuts that does not fit easily with the Cheltenham image of blimps and blue skies.

The council has been hung since 1985, with first the Liberal Democrats and more recently the Tories providing the dominant political force. The council is divided between 22 Tories, 22 Liberal Democrats and 16 Labour councillors. Party political distinctions have receded in the county as the three main groups have concentrated their fire on Whitehall.



Gloucestershire politicians of all hues believe they are the victims of a low-spending past that has allowed central government to impose a wholly inadequate spending limit on the council at a time when the social problems of the county have never been more acute.

A Labour/Conservative budget of just under £317 million exceeds the government's standard spending assessment for the county by more than £10 million, making Gloucestershire the only English county to exceed its capping limit. On Wednesday the council voted to appeal to

the Department of the Environment for more cash.

Last year a similar appeal yielded an unexpected £2.5 million, only a quarter of what was asked for, but £2.5 million more than anticipated. Party leaders argue that the case for more funding is even stronger this year and should not be ignored by the government.

According to Frank Thompson, the Labour group leader, the effect on services generally of a capped budget would be "catastrophic". The Tory leader, Richard Izzet, chooses his words more carefully but the message is the same. "The government and its advisers have failed to understand, because of their remoteness, the difficulties facing Gloucestershire because of its low expenditure levels."

Promises to review the standard spending assessment system for next year are dismissed by the Tories as

"jam tomorrow", and Mr Izzet's election message describes the system as "flawed" and "inequitable".

Having declined to join the delegation that pulled the £2.5 million rabbit out of the hat last year, the Tories cannot afford in election year to appear anything other than doughty defenders of the interests of Gloucestershire, even if that means unpopularity at Central Office. According to Mr Izzet: "If it comes to a clash of loyalty between party and the county to whom one has made a commitment one has to stand by the county." Any other course would spell electoral disaster on May 6.

So small are the differences between the parties that for the past two years Labour and the Conservatives have alternated sharing the main council committees.

Diary, page 16

Yeltsin repays West by backing firm line on Bosnia



Lukin: shuttle mission to win over Belgrade

FROM ANNE McELVOY IN MOSCOW
AND IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Yeltsin yesterday repaid President Clinton for American support in the run-up to Sunday's Russian referendum, adding his own weight to Western pressure on the Bosnian Serbs.

Mr Yeltsin warned Bosnian Serbs that they would not be protected by Russia if they continued to thwart the international peace plan and said that Russia would back the West's line on the conflict. Mr Yeltsin described the Vance-Owen plan, rejected on Monday by the Bosnian Serbs, as the only realistic solution available, and quashed Serb hopes of support from Moscow against sanctions. "The Russian Federation will not pro-

tect those who resist the will of the world community," he declared.

In Washington yesterday, the vice-chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral David Jeremiah, said allied air strikes against Serb military positions in Bosnia would be difficult and dangerous. Admiral Jeremiah said it would be a long-term operation, with damage to civilian areas and aircraft shot down.

Warren Christopher, the Secretary of State, set strict guidelines for the use of force against the Serbs. He told a Senate committee that allied action would require clearly stating the reasons for the American people: likely success; an

■ The Russian president, brushing aside conservative sympathy for fellow Slavs, has told the Serbs that they must obey the UN

"exit strategy"; and American public support.

Yesterday Mr Yeltsin hinted that he accepted the need for external intervention in Bosnia, saying "the time has come for decisive measures", but did not make clear whether Russia would be prepared actively to back such an operation if sanctions failed. He had hitherto been reluctant to risk the wrath of domestic nationalists by openly siding with the West. Having won a vote of confidence in the referendum, he believes he can reduce the influence of the conservative

parliament, which has opposed sanctions, against the Serbs, and also seems anxious to place his stamp on Balkan policy which has appeared to be slipping into the control of cautious foreign ministry officials anxious not to break ties with Belgrade.

The Russian foreign and defence ministries yesterday distanced themselves from any move which would sever that historical bond or imply support for military action. A foreign ministry spokesman said the international community must avoid "unilateral, unreasoned and violent actions" in Yugoslavia, adding that military intervention could lead to the conflict spreading.

Mr Yeltsin's envoy on Bosnia, Vitali Churkin, the deputy foreign minister, has been engaged in shuttle diplomacy aimed at persuading Serbia to accept an amended peace plan. He has condemned the international community for pursuing "too hasty" steps against Yugoslavia and recently said that threatening only one party risked prolonging the bloodshed.

Admiral Jeremiah's warning amounted to the Pentagon putting its wary views on record as Mr Clinton was consulting about options for action in Bosnia, although other officials privately dispute his verdict. He described bad weather and rough terrain in Bosnia as making air raids against Serb artillery and supply routes a difficult prospect, especially if the Serbs hid their weapons in bunkers or civilian buildings.

A widespread but largely unspoken uneasiness in America is that military action could escalate, as it did in Vietnam, the war Mr Clinton avoided. Wesley Pruden, editor of the anti-Clinton *Washington Times*, even dragged the president's 13-year-old daughter into the argument: "Mr Clinton ought to say exactly what he has in mind [on Bosnia] because we may be there long enough for Private First Class Chelsea Clinton, US Marine Corps, to redeem the Clinton family honour."

Charge of Light Brigade 'is lesson for Nato'

FROM GEORGE BROCK IN BRUSSELS

As moves towards a tougher action in Bosnia-Herzegovina gathered pace yesterday, Nato governments were warned that unless they clarified their aims, soldiers risked being stuck there "half way through the next century".

Field Marshal Sir Richard Vincent, chairman of Nato's military committee and until recently Britain's Chief of the Defence Staff, said that governments debating how to impose peace in the Balkans were ignoring the lessons taught by the charge of the Light Brigade. Napoleon's ignominious retreat from Moscow and the military thinker Clausewitz.

He said that any intervention in the Balkans needed a clear political aim. "There has to be a matching, coherent, convergent civil affairs plan," he said. "The military out there are a means to an end. They are not an end in themselves. If we go out on the basis that we are an end in ourselves, we will be there half way through the next century."

He emphasised the enormous commitment of resources and time that would be required to move tens of thousands of troops to Bosnia. "You cannot defy the law of military logistics," he said. Armies with inadequate logistic support "engage in retreats from Moscow such as occurred in 1812".

He added that the United Nations' present Vance-Owen peace plan was of little use as a basis for military planning and that governments remained divided over how far it should be enforced against the will of local warlords. He cast doubt on the value of air strikes against Serb positions, although he said that Nato had done no detailed planning for air raids.

Sir Richard said that during the Cold War, Nato's 16 governments had led a comfortable and predictable existence, made "pretty formalised" decisions and were in danger of forgetting Clausewitz's first principle of war.

The first principle "is to decide what you want to do", he said. Governments have not so far answered his question: "Would you please tell us what you want to achieve?" The Light Brigade, he added, had gallantly charged the enemy in the Crimea, "but to no great strategic avail that I am aware of".

Yesterday's meeting of Nato's 16 national chiefs of staff did not formally discuss air strikes or possible military supervision of the UN peace plan because Nato has received no official request to act for the UN. Sir Richard's calmly delivered criticisms reflect deep frustration and anxiety inside Nato at the inadequacy of the political guidance received so far.

General John Shalikashvili, Nato's supreme commander in Europe, who attended yesterday's meeting, has publicly criticised plans for air strikes as liable to cause civilian casualties.

UK padre weeps for the dead of Ahinici

BY TOM RHODES IN VITEZ AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

THE padre to the British troops in central Bosnia wept yesterday as he helped soldiers to remove seven charred bodies from the remnants of what had once been their family home in Ahinici.

The bodies, thought to be a mother, father and five children, were discovered by the British last week after the village had been burnt by extremist Bosnian Croats.

Clearly moved by the appalling sight of the victims, Captain Tyrone Hillary, padre to the forces in Vitez, who was accompanied by a local imam, said: "I think it is my job to be with soldiers when they are doing jobs like this. I want to be at their side to help them cope with the horror. What is happening here is beyond my understanding; it is beyond anyone's understanding."

One sniper shot struck a wall behind those in attendance. Lieutenant Colonel Bob Stewart then ordered his men into the hedgerow and sent three armoured warriors crashing through wooden fences up a steep meadow towards the woods where the shot had originated. Two snipers were apparently spotted, but the UN commander had told his men to return fire only in extremis.

British medics donned rubber gloves and went into the house with plastic body bags to collect the charred remains. "I've never done anything like this before," said Corporal Richie Clarke. He said that five people whose bodies were discovered on the lower floor, appeared to have huddled together in their last moments. The troops wrapped up the corpses and drove them to an unknown location for burial.

The regional Croat commander, Dario Kordic, has promised to set up a tribunal to investigate the atrocities of Ahinici. Earlier this week, he claimed he had arrested five men in connection with the massacre. They are believed to be former members of HOS, the radical faction of the Croat defence force.

Asked if he thought Croat extremists had been responsible, Col Stewart said it would be foolish to guess but added: "I don't think it was Muslims and I don't think it was Serbs."

In an action between the Bosnian Muslim town of Zenica and Tuzla, yesterday, two United Nations aid convoy drivers, one British and one Bosnian, were badly wounded in a mortar attack. UN officials said.

The men, who were unnamed, were taken to a Canadian military field hospital at Visoko in central Bosnia.



Air of authority: a Bosnian Serb soldier standing guard beneath a television transmitter on Mount Majeveca, seven miles east of Tuzla

RAF prepares for bombing raids

Continued from page 1
Ministry of Defence sources said yesterday that British troops would continue with their escort duties in the face of the risk of revenge attacks.

Contingency plans to evacuate the troops were drawn up in January when it was feared that enforcement of the air exclusion zone could lead to wholesale attacks on UN ground troops. In the event, that did not happen, and now ministers have been advised that revenge action is likely to be limited even in the face of

air strikes. If there were a full-scale assault, soldiers would move to a safer area but would not be pulled out altogether.

Although Serb action against the UN force has been less than feared, sporadic attacks have continued and yesterday British soldiers came under fire in both central and eastern Bosnia. A British convoy leader and his local driver were shot and seriously wounded on the road from Zenica to Tuzla, and in a separate incident, British troops came under sniper fire

as they moved the charred bodies of a Muslim family from their burnt-out home in the village of Ahinici in eastern Bosnia, where Croats and Muslims are in conflict.

The Serbs meanwhile showed their defiance of the tougher UN sanctions that came into force yesterday by launching an attack in Muslim-held northeastern Bosnia. Up to 150 Serb troops backed by tanks and artillery advanced into the Bihac area, where 300,000 people are being supplied with UN aid.

Defiant Serbs open front in Bihac as sanctions intensify

FROM TIM JUDAH IN BELGRADE

AS STRINGENT new sanctions came into force against Serbia yesterday, defiant Serbs crossed into a large enclave in northwest Bosnia known as the Bihac pocket. In response, General Lars Erik Wahlgren, commander of the United Nations forces in former Yugoslavia, told his soldiers to protect civilians threatened by the fighting.

"I have ordered my troops to prevent violations of human rights according to the Geneva Conventions," he said adding that this meant his personnel would protect "women and children from being taken hostage". They would also prevent civilian houses being used as a base for the fighting.

Asked if this meant that UN troops could open fire on an attacker, he said: "They can fire warning shots first... in Lebanon, we put soldiers on the roof of houses to stop them being blown up. These are standard operating procedures in a peacekeeping mission."

The fighting in Bihac was described by Cedric Thornberry, second in command of the UN operation in Yugoslavia, as "a mystery". About 1,000 Serb troops were spotted musing close to the border of the enclave overnight and between 100 and 150 soldiers subsequently entered it. They were supported by tanks and artillery.

What puzzles the UN is that the soldiers did not launch their assault from Bosnia but from UN-held Serb-controlled territory in Croatia. Gen Wahlgren said Serb military chiefs in the self-proclaimed Republic of Serbian Krajina claimed to have no knowledge of the fighting.

He said that he did not know if the Serb troops were from Croatia or were Bosnian Serbs who had crossed into UN-controlled territory. Mr Thornberry said: "All of them are very old, over 50, so it's

very unusual." Tanjug, the Belgrade news agency, said that Serb forces had repelled a Muslim attack but gave few details.

Gen Wahlgren's orders appeared to provoke some confusion within UN ranks because Mr Thornberry said that they had a mandate only to protect UN aid convoys. A substantial contingent of French "blue berets" is based in Bihac.

The Bihac pocket is overwhelmingly Muslim, and Serb forces have made only half-hearted attempts to take it. They have always been divided about whether they should conquer an area which

Muslim help

Karachi: The war in Bosnia was the main item on the agenda of a meeting of foreign ministers of Islamic countries here, Indonesia's foreign minister, Ali Alatas, said. Saudi Arabia pledged \$20 million (£12.5 million) to help Muslims in Bosnia, and other countries were expected to make pledges of further financial assistance at a later stage, officials said. (AFP)

lies in the middle of Serb territories in Croatia and Bosnia or leave it to its inhabitants.

If Serb troops had attacked from Bosnia, it could have been assumed that they were trying to take a small part of a railway line which is in Muslim hands. Mr Thornberry suggested that a "local initiative" could be under way. Bearing in mind the debate over air strikes, Gen Wahlgren said he thought that the incursion took place at a time if it is not a local initiative.

In Belgrade yesterday, Milorad Unkovic, the federal

minister for foreign economic relations, attacked the new UN sanctions as "ethnic cleansing", adding that their effect would be "genocidal".

More soberly, Radoje Konic, the Yugoslav prime minister, observed that "poverty knocks on every door".

The new sanctions are designed to plug loopholes in the general trade embargo that came into effect last May. Above all, this means that goods, ostensibly destined for neighbouring countries, cannot be shipped or taken by lorry or rail through Serbia without UN permission.

United States customs officers, helping Romanian and Bulgarian officials patrolling the Danube, were yesterday advising about the new documentation that ships will need. They were also attempting to work out how to distinguish forgeries.

For the past two days, there have been reports from Washington, London, Sofia, Bucharest and Brussels as each country and the European Community institutes the new sanctions, especially the freezing of Yugoslav assets. However, the most important steps were taken in Cyprus, where the authorities announced the freezing of the assets of three Serbian banks and 50 offshore companies.

Since the embargo came into force, the island has been suspected of being the main financial clearing house for sanctions busting. The new regulations will go some way towards throttling the business if not stamping it out. But, since the text of the UN resolution has been known for weeks, it is unlikely that much money will have been left in Cyprus to seize. Nor is it clear where it has gone.

Ronaldo Mota Sardenberg, the Brazilian chairman of the UN Security Council's sanctions committee in New York, said Yugoslavia "will feel the bite immediately, especially in the financial sphere".

While it will now be very hard to move goods in and out of Serbia, by targeting the banks and offshore companies, the UN is trying to stamp out sanctions-busting deals by preventing Serbian and Serb-owned front companies transacting in the first place.

America has given Romania three river-patrol boats to help stop goods reaching Serbia along the Danube. However, tracking financial transactions is a far more difficult job which will need an army of highly specialised financial experts to control.

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Kremlin tells hardliners to make way for reform

FROM ANNE McELVOY IN MOSCOW

SUPPORTERS and opponents of President Yeltsin embarked yesterday on what is likely to be a long tussle over the results of Sunday's referendum. Kremlin advisers said he intends to interpret the ballot as a mandate for sweeping constitutional changes.

As a confident Mr Yeltsin warned the conservative parliament that it faced its "last chance" to come into line with Western governments over the former Yugoslavia or stand discredited in the eyes of the democratic world, the electoral commission confirmed that he had won 58 per cent of the votes cast on confidence in him and 33 per cent support for his economic policies.

Mikhail Poteranin, his close aide, said that the president had been given a "free hand by the people to act decisively" and that he intended to press ahead with his plan to abolish the Congress of People's Deputies and recast the country's parliamentary structures.

Mr Poteranin said that, if parliament refused to co-operate in its own reform, Mr Yeltsin would seek "other levers", acting through decrees and turning to a national constitutional assembly to force through changes to the unwieldy twin structure of congress and Supreme Soviet. Only 43 per cent of the electorate voted for the early parliamentary elections, however, showing that popular enthusiasm for yet more political upheaval is limited and Mr Yeltsin faces an uphill task in convincing regional leaders to back him in his campaign to ditch the congress and replace it with a two-chamber parliament.

The opposition is unimpressed by the popular vote in Mr Yeltsin's favour and many refuse to acknowledge that it has any significance. The hardline Russian Unity faction called on Mr Yeltsin to resign, arguing in yesterday's parliamentary session that the vote showed a lack of confidence in the leader because those who had

stayed away were all against him. Mikhail Astafyev, another prominent opposition figure said that the country was under minority rule. But Sergei Shakrai, Mr Yeltsin's brightest deputy prime minister, told democrats not to worry about the hardliners' attacks, adding: "They are the kind of people who think that the only elections worth having are the ones in which the leader gets 99.9 per cent of the vote, like the old days."

As the catalogue of complaints continued, Viktor Chernomyrdin, the prime minister, could be forgiven for his curious choice of words at a gathering of oil industrialists. The head of government told his startled listeners that he wanted to "stay out of politics" in the coming months, apparently meaning that he would avoid the constitutional fray, but succumbing to the same confusion on the relations between politics, economic reform and constitutionality that besets most ordinary Russians.

The media struggled in traditional fashion to make the results fit its preconceived view of the referendum. Pravda managed not to inform its readers that Mr Yeltsin had won the vote and headlined its story: "Only one third of Russians are for moving towards world capitalism" before bemoaning the "wild spring outburst of democracy". The pro-reform *Izvestia* urged Mr Yeltsin to act quickly and decisively to end the constitutional deadlock before the gains of the ballot were weakened by his enemies' plotting.

Western leaders sent congratulations to Mr Yeltsin yesterday. President Clinton told him by telephone the result was a great step forward and hailed the "far-sightedness of the Russian people". Mr Clinton said that the vote would speed the proposed \$4 billion (£2.5 billion) aid package through the US Congress.

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BANK OF SCOTLAND

12 OVERSEAS NEWS

Budget chief admits Clinton adrift after first 100 days

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

The American leader is suffering the worst early poll ratings of any modern president. He is resilient, however, and many analysts expect him to bounce back

PRESIDENT Clinton will not celebrate his 100th day in office tomorrow. He will end it with speeches, new initiatives, and a glossy 32-page brochure on "the most action-orientated administration in our memory", the White House said. But the best possible spin on an occasion that it would have preferred to ignore.

But those efforts were spectacularly undermined yesterday by Leon Panetta, Mr Clinton's budget director. The president's clout on Capitol Hill was so diminished, Mr Panetta said, that his economic plan was in serious danger of being torn apart, his health reforms would have to be delayed, the North American Free Trade Agreement was for the time being "dead", and his Russian aid package was likely to be rejected.

But even before that reckless burst of candour from a man who knows Congress inside out, the White House mood was grim. The inauguration's giddy euphoria is now a poignant memory. The national optimism engendered by the president's election has been dissipated. Mr Clinton has the worst poll ratings of any modern president so early in his term, and the Republicans mockingly thank him for their resurrection.

The president claims in speeches to have "fundamentally changed the direction" of American government but his tone off-podium is wistful and defensive. "I have a lot to learn about this town," he acknowledged after the Senate approved his economic stimulus bill last week.

At a recent White House meeting, Thomas "Mac" McLary, the White House chief of staff, tried to cheer up colleagues by recalling that only an attempted assassination

tion revived President Reagan's early ratings. "Er, Mack, what are you suggesting here?" asked Rahm Emanuel, the political director. "Things aren't that bad."

The 100th day is in reality a silly milestone for Mr Clinton or any other leader, a legacy of Franklin Roosevelt who took power at a time of emergency and used his huge majorities on Capitol Hill to ram the New Deal's fundamentals through Congress.

Mr Clinton's 100th day falls at a singularly unpropitious moment, with the stimulus bill and the Waco debacle fresh in the memory. But the occasion generates a torrent of reviews which in Mr Clinton's case have been distinctly tepid. If people believe he is weak, his authority in Congress will be further eroded and he will find it hard to recover.

He must blame himself. He took office promising to focus, laser-like, on the economy. His greatest achievement was undoubtedly the breakthrough production and selling of a \$500 billion (£312 billion) deficit reduction plan that included the largest tax increases ever. But the laser, as one commentator put it, now looks like a strobe light.

Mr Clinton has lost the intense discipline of his campaign. He began squandering political capital within days of taking office by allowing the issue of homosexuals in the military to dominate the agenda. That was swiftly followed by his embarrassing three-bit hunt, born of political correctness, for the first female US attorney-general.

No one doubts Mr Clinton's vigour. In stark contrast to the

minimalism of George Bush, he believes in activist government, and has a huge agenda. That is all very well, but to date he has filled just a fraction of his administration's several thousand posts.

Mr Clinton spent an entire day at an Oregon timber summit, but has yet to produce a coherent policy on international trade, an issue which will have a profound impact on his attempts to revive the American economy. His first important legislative defeat — on the economic stimulus package — and to an extent the Waco fiasco were the result of presidential inattention. Indeed no one quite knows where the administration is heading.

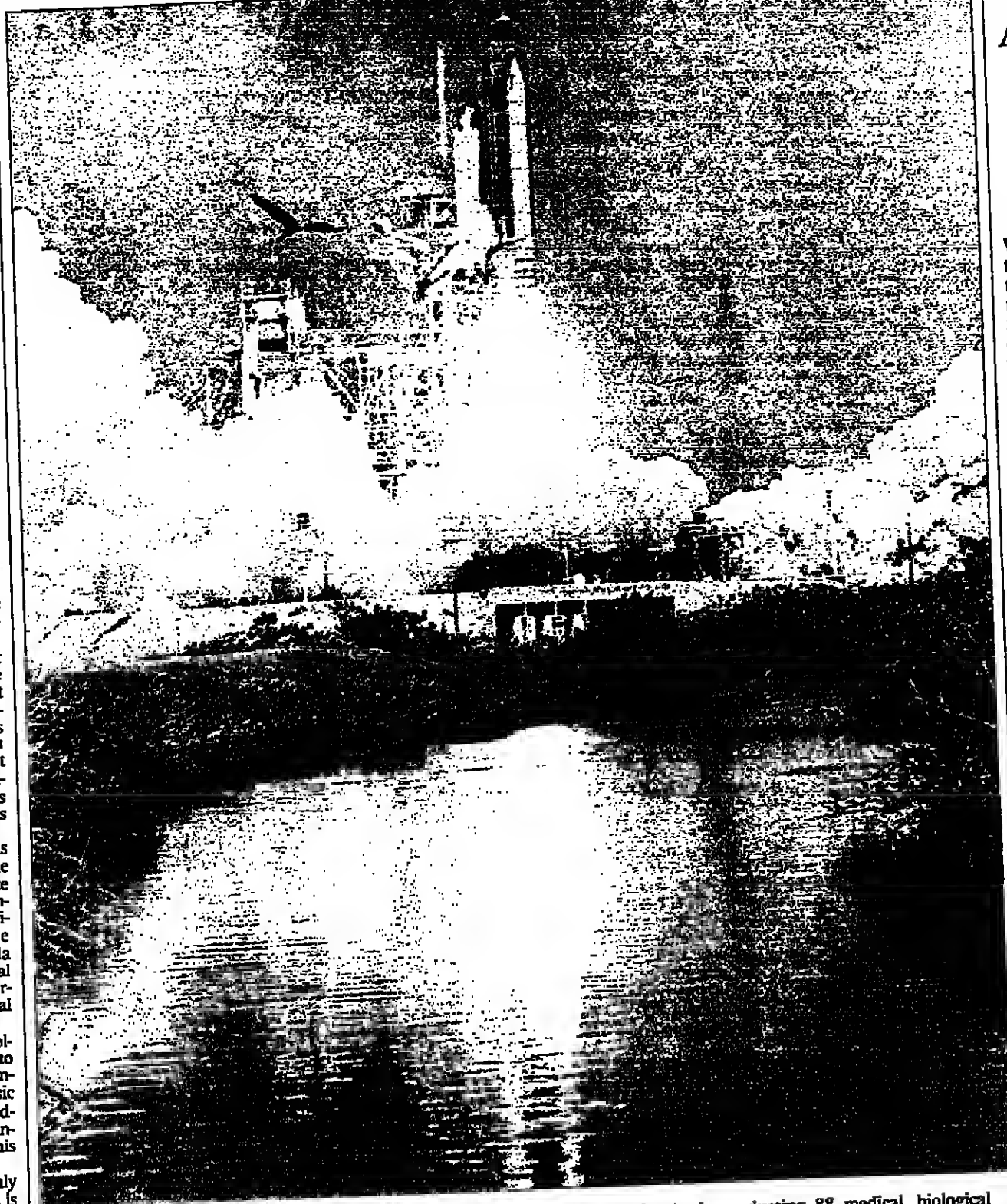
"The economy, stupid," is no longer the watchword. The "New Democrat" candidate who supported the death penalty and personal responsibility has become the president whose social agenda is topped by homosexual rights, the relaxation of abortion restrictions, and racial and sexual diversity.

Commentators and colleagues are urging him to emulate Mr Reagan, not Jimmy Carter, to refocus on basic goals. "I may have overextended myself," Mr Clinton confessed after taking stock of his position last weekend.

But the ledger is certainly not all negative. Mr Clinton is courageously confronting America's two great domestic problems of budget deficits and health care that his predecessors cravenly ignored. He backed President Yeltsin, galvanised the world into further aid for Russia, and can claim some credit for Sunday's referendum results. He has impressed as a world leader. He has broken promises, but mostly the irresponsible ones. He dared give his wife, Hillary, the most challenging assignment of his administration, revolutionising the one-seventh of the economy that makes up health care. On a personal level, he is vigorous, strikingly contemporary, relentlessly empathetic, a rapid learner, and a roaster of detail.

Mr Clinton is also amazingly resilient. With 1,300 days remaining before the next election, only a fool would write him off. Indeed he may confound his critics by becoming the first president celebrated for his second 100 days. It is in that period that he must decide on military intervention in Bosnia, and will unveil the health programme.

Those are the events likely to make or break this presidency. In the meantime, one poll figure offers him consolation. By 54 per cent to 28, Americans still consider him an improvement on George Bush.



Flight paths: a great blue heron watching tadpoles and perch fry float and dart about inside sealed chambers as part of their biological experiments. Scientists want to see how fish and frogs develop in the weightlessness of space, particularly the organs that provide the sense of balance. The crew is conducting 88 medical, biological and other experiments, all of them overseen by a control centre in Germany. Columbia's first countdown ended with an engine shutdown three seconds before lift-off last month because of a clogged valve.

Survivors' lawyers allege bias in arson report by Waco experts

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN NEW YORK

AS THE confusing and contradictory enquiry into the blaze at the Waco cult compound continues, an independent team of investigators has issued a report confirming the FBI's claim that Branch Davidians members started the fire which killed 86 people in less than 30 minutes. Its findings were challenged at once as biased and unreliable.

The arson investigation team rejected survivors' claims that the fire had been caused when FBI tanks knocked over containers of lantern fuel as they rammed the building in an effort to force out the cult members, using tear gas, after 51 days fruitless negotiations. "This fire was intentionally set by persons inside the compound," said Paul Gray, assistant chief fire investigator in Houston, Texas, and head of the arson investigation team. He added that the blaze started simultaneously in at least two places in the building and some time after the last assault by the FBI tanks.

Those conclusions were dismissed by lawyers for the survivors, who said the arson investigation team could not conduct an impartial investigation because of its extensive links with the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), the branch of the treasury that launched the first disastrous raid on the compound on February 28. Mr Gray's wife works for the bureau in Houston and every member of the arson team was recommended by the bureau, the lawyers said. "Until I see the evidence from an independent, impartial expert, I choose to believe the first-hand account of witnesses who were in the centre who said there was no fire started by the Branch Davidians," said Jack Zimmerman, who represented Steve Schneider, chief henchman to David Koresh, the cult leader. Koresh and Schneider are believed to have died in the fire.

The ATF and FBI are front-runners in this field. Mr Gray told *The New York Times*: "You would have to go to another planet for experts who have not worked for them." However, the survivors' lawyers insist that the involvement of federal officials in the enquiry will weaken the public's confidence in the preliminary findings.

Post-mortem examinations have been performed on 12 of the 44 bodies pulled from the charred remains of the compound. Two of them apparently died of a single gunshot wound to the head, indicating probable suicide.

One of the bodies identified was that of David Michael Jones, 38, a member of the inner circle of cult "warriors" surrounding Koresh known as the "Mighty Men". Jones, a postman, is reported to have played a crucial role in the initial confrontation when he noticed a television news van by the roadside on the morning of the raid and was warned by a TV photographer that an assault was imminent.

Cash flow

Phnom Penh: Fake Thai banknotes, mostly in the 100 baht (£2.50) denomination, have flooded into Cambodia and could create an economic crisis before general elections, which are due to be held next month, are due to be held next month. (Reuters)

Sofia suicide

Sofia: A daughter of President Zhelev of Bulgaria has committed suicide. *Trud* reported that Yordanka Zheleva, 22, had poisoned herself. (Reuters)

Regal legal

Corfu: Deposed King Constantine of Greece is suing Corfu for trespass after the mayor opened the royal estate to tourists. (Reuters)



Heads together: President Clinton dared give his wife, Hillary, the key job of reforming health care

Eritreans cast 99% vote for freedom

FROM JONATHAN CLAYTON IN ASMARA

ERITREANS voted almost unanimously for independence from Ethiopia in a landmark referendum after 30 years of civil war which ended in May 1991. Provisional results of the United Nations-monitored poll, released yesterday, showed that more than 99 per cent of voters were cast in favour of independence for the Red Sea province.

Amare Tekle, head of the Eritrean referendum commission, said that 1,100,260 voted "yes" and only 1,822 voted "no". More than 98 per cent of 1,173,506 registered voters participated in the ballot.

The UN said its observers had concluded that the nationwide three-day poll was "free and fair". Samir Sanbar, the special United Nations representative, said his teams had covered virtually all the 1,014 polling stations in Eritrea and had uncovered only minor irregularities.

"I have the honour to certify that, on the whole, the referendum process in Eritrea can be considered to have been free and fair at every stage, and that it has been conducted to my satisfaction," he said.

A formal declaration of independence will be made on May 24 — the second anniversary of the defeat by Eritrean guerrillas of forces loyal to Mengistu Haile Mariam, the fallen Ethiopian dictator.

Eritrea, a former Italian colony federated with Ethiopia by the UN in 1952, has enjoyed de facto independence for the past two years. The former guerrillas of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front agreed to put off a formal declaration until a UN-monitored poll settled the issue in international eyes.

Immediately after the provisional result was announced, Negasso Gidada, Ethiopia's information minister, congratulated the Eritrean people and said his country looked forward to close co-operation in all areas. "The transitional government of Ethiopia happily accepts and respects the decision of the Eritrean people to have an independent Eritrea."

The liberation front has pledged that the world's newest country will have a multiparty constitution and a free economy.

Eritrea, occupying a strategic position on the Red Sea, was devastated by its long war and the liberation front estimates it will need \$2 billion (£1.27 billion) in emergency aid to get the economy started and repair the ruined infrastructure. (Reuters)

Confrontation in Hong Kong

Peking outflanks Patten with victory in business forum

BY OUR FOREIGN STAFF

CHINA has scored another victory in its campaign to subdue Hong Kong by capturing five of the six contested seats on the 24-member General Chamber of Commerce. Hong Kong citizens will note the importance of three of the new members: a delegate to the National People's Congress, China's parliament; a member of the Political Consultative Congress, which also does as the party wants; and a former close colleague of Zhu Rongji, a deputy prime minister and the man tipped to succeed Deng Xiaoping when he dies.

"It's a turning point for the pro-China group within the chamber," said Jimmy McGregor, a member of the chamber and its representative on the colony's Legislative Council, and one of Peking's longest-term adversaries in Hong Kong. Mr McGregor himself is on the endangered list both in the chamber and on the council, and may lose his council seat in the 1995 elections, when Peking will press hard to force out supporters of the governor, Chris Patten.

Although James Tien, one of the pro-Peking victors, claimed that "the chamber's business is business", the 3,600 members, representing

both small businessmen and the great trading houses, is Hong Kong's most influential business body.

One of those swept from the chamber was Martin Barrow, head of Jardine Pacific Ltd, part of Jardine Matheson, the oldest trader in the colony. Jardine has been attacked by Peking for months, for having moved its corporate headquarters to Bermuda in 1984, soon after the Anglo-Chinese joint declaration, and for refusing to join other business leaders in attacking Mr Patten's plan to extend democracy in Hong Kong. The Barrow loss will be especially gratifying to Peking, as he was in line to become the chamber's next chairman.

Peking will be delighted by the victory of Chang Wing-kee, the delegate to the National People's Congress and one of China's advisers on Hong Kong, designated as "patriotic" by the Chinese — a code term for anyone who attacks the Patten plan.

Alex Ye, another new chamber member, is the Hong Kong representative on the Shanghai Foreign Investment Commission, but more important still was in 1988 the executive vice-chairman of the Shanghai investment commission, which was formed by

Mr Zhu, the deputy prime minister, when he was Shanghai's mayor.

The victory for China's interest in the colony is a significant example of the Chinese arm-twisting and manoeuvring which is eroding Mr Patten's support even among members of the Hong Kong community who welcomed his plan last October. Both the British and Chinese negotiating teams in Peking will see the chamber vote for what it is: a sign that Hong Kong's business community believes it cannot afford to antagonise the big market across the border.

□ Singapore: China and Taiwan, easing four decades of Cold War hostility, yesterday agreed to set up a formal channel for negotiations on a range of economic and social issues.

The agreement was announced on the first of two days of talks here, the highest-level contact between the two old enemies since the end of the Chinese civil war in 1949. A Taiwan spokesman, Cheyne Chiu, said Taiwan and China had drafted agreements for regular meetings between the two semi-official organisations that deal with ties in the absence of diplomatic relations. (Reuters)



Treurnicht buried near apartheid's architect

Afrikaners mourn Treurnicht

FROM AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE IN PRETORIA

UP TO 3,000 whites, most of them Afrikaners, flocked to central Pretoria yesterday to attend the funeral service of Andries Treurnicht, the leader of the far-right Conservative Party, who died last week.

Afterwards, mourners went to Pretoria West cemetery, where Treurnicht was buried near his hero, the architect of apartheid, Hendrik Verwoerd. About 1,000 people attended the service, and 2,000 listened to a broadcast in the city centre. Several hundred went to the cemetery, as Treurnicht was given a family burial as the national anthem played.

Treurnicht formed his party in 1982 as a breakaway from the ruling Nationalists.

Rajasthan flouts law as thousands of children get married

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI

THOUSANDS of children have been married this week in Rajasthan in an annual ritual that defies and mocks the law. The festival is called *akhatej*, when boys and girls aged from four to 12 are given partners for life.

The police made token attempts to ban some weddings, but most villages in the desert state were left alone to perform the ancient ceremonies. Many posted guards on village outskirts to keep outsiders away until the rites were over; any policemen who turned up were sent away with bribes.

The police admit that no body was arrested or charged under legislation banning child marriages, arguing that the custom is too popular and deeply rooted for any ban to be effective. According to one report yesterday from Jaipur, more than 7,000 marriages took place in the Tonk district south of the city without interference from the authorities.

Across the state, the figure was probably tens of thousands. Throughout the Jaipur area "there was not a single village where such marriages did not take place", according to the *Hindustan Times*. "The parents of child brides and bridegrooms were not afraid of the administration and the marriages took place with pomp and show." In the village of Tiliya, the entire population

turned out to provide financial assistance to Pokhar Ram, who married off three daughters and a son.

Enore villages in the Jaipur district turned out for wedding feasts and music festivals, when the bemused young brides and grooms eyed each other, often for the first time. The "couples" will live apart until they are ready to consummate their marriages. At that time, further haggling over dowry takes place and brides' parents slide further into debt.

Only in urban areas were the ceremonies performed discreetly, for fear of attracting police attention. Parents of child brides and grooms chased away press photographers, aware that publication of their photographs could lead to prosecution. Clearly, however, there is no political will to ban child marriage: the law outlawing the practice in Rajasthan has rarely been implemented.

Many of the children were dressed in full marriage attire, and some grooms from better off families arrived on horseback. The occasions are a lottery when the fathers of sons collect whatever dowry money and gifts they can extract. It is a glorious time for money-lenders, a hated breed whose excessive interest rates keep whole families in debt for generations.

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Senators strip away more of Andreotti's armour



Andreotti: he insists that he is not afraid of the truth and intends to defend his innocence with firmness amid a political "climate of intimidation"

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS
IN ROME

GIULIO Andreotti, a life senator, elder statesman of the Christian Democratic party and former Italian prime minister, should have his parliamentary immunity from prosecution waived to enable allegations to be investigated that he plotted with the Sicilian Mafia, a senate committee recommended yesterday.

The decision, by 11 votes to one with 11 abstentions, was reached as Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, 72, the prime minister-designate and governor of the Bank of Italy, prepared a cabinet to present to President Scalfaro for approval. Signor Ciampi must then face a vote of confidence in the Chamber of Deputies before becoming Italy's first non-parliamentarian prime minister in the postwar republic. Yesterday he saw only Mario Segni, who inspired the April 18 referendum in which voters backed electoral reform.

Signor Andreotti, 74, who personified the old Cold War system, faces a full senate vote on his immunity on May 6. After yesterday's committee vote, he said: "I am not afraid of the truth and will confront

Abstentions by his own party put Italy's elder statesman on course to stand trial for alleged connections to the Mafia

proceedings with firmness and decision to smash this incredible machination." He claimed that "pressure has been organised on the [senate committee] to create a climate of intimidation".

Three Mafia informers have said that Signor Andreotti met Sicilian underworld bosses, including Salvatore "Totò" Riina, allegedly the current head of Cosa Nostra. One supergrass, Baldassare Di Maggio, claims the Christian Democrat politician exchanged a "kiss of respect" in a Palermo flat with Signor Riina, who was captured in January.

The committee member who voted against the motion was Luigi Compagna, a Liberal senator. The Christian Democrats abstained. "We contend that all the accusations were unfounded and, if it goes to trial, Andreotti will demonstrate fully his innocence," said Giovanni Cocco, who was one of them.

Signor Ciampi hopes to

usher in a new era by filling his administration with technical experts to preside over electoral reform until a general election is held before next spring. Newspapers said yesterday that he might name Giuliano Amato, the outgoing prime minister, as foreign minister, although Signor Amato said he would retire from politics after his government was brought down last week by the referendum vote backing political reform and by the corruption scandal engulfing the country.

Nicola Mancino, the interior minister, was expected to continue in the new cabinet, but a replacement was likely for Salvatore Ando, the defence minister, who is under investigation on suspicion of having bought votes from the Mafia.

Signor Ciampi appears assured of support from most MPs in the four parties in Signor Amato's administration — the Socialists, Christian Democrats, Liberals and

Social Democrats. But he needs wider support if he is to get electoral reform through parliament, which is divided over whether to introduce a single or two-round system of elections for the lower house.

The opposition Democratic Party of the Left has said it will await Signor Ciampi's programme before deciding whether to support him. The former communists are in particular pressing Signor Ciampi to spell out his views on an amnesty for the 2,600 politicians, businessmen and officials implicated in the corruption scandal.



Riina: allegedly greeted with "kiss of respect"

Mafiosi women in prison protest

FROM REUTERS
IN ROME

WIVES and mothers of jailed mafiosi held a noisy protest over prison conditions yesterday opposite the prime minister's office in Rome.

"We demand our rights. We want to see our men once a week," chanted 100 women from the heartlands of the Camorra — the Naples Mafia — while their children blew whistles and sounded horns.

Adele, a formidable woman with a megaphone, said: "Who is going to try [former justice minister Claudio] Martelli and send him to prison? The big fish always gobble up the little ones." Signor Martelli resigned in February over allegations of political corruption. Last year, he clamped down on prison visits for mafiosi and sent hundreds to island jails after two leading anti-Mafia judges were killed. The authorities claim that jailed gangsters use family visits to run their criminal empires, one reason they are not allowed physical contact with visitors.

France pleads for respite from flood of EC regulations

FROM REUTERS IN PARIS

FRANCE'S conservative government, keen to appease Euro-sceptics, urged the European Community yesterday to end an "inflationary" spiral of new rules and give member states time to catch their breath.

Alain Lamassoure, the European affairs minister, said the centre-right government wanted the EC to allow countries time to catch up with putting existing directives into effect and reduce new measures. "It has to put a stop to measures relating to member states and concentrate more on applying [existing rules]," he said after briefing a parliamentary committee. He said almost one in five European Community rules had yet to be implemented.

M Lamassoure's comments reflected the government's desire to placate the many Euro-sceptics within the centre-right majority that won last month's general election. The government wants to give a greater say to the many conservative deputies who opposed the

Maastricht treaty, without calling into question the strong pro-European tilt of Edouard Balladur, the prime minister.

About half of the parliamentarians from M Balladur's Gaullist (RPR) party, which is the biggest in the national assembly, rejected the Maastricht accords on political, economic and monetary union. Voters narrowly approved the treaty in a referendum last September. Philippe Séguin, the new parliamentary Speaker, was one of the leaders of the anti-Maastricht camp, which claimed that the treaty would strip France of its sovereign rights.

M Lamassoure said that the Maastricht debate had convinced the government of the need to involve French citizens more closely with the Community and to make EC institutions clearer. Parliament would be able to exercise greater control over the government and strengthen the hand of ministers at EC negotiations if it registered its opinion with a vote before key Community decisions, he said.

M Lamassoure also said yesterday that the EC's plan to scrap all border controls on people, already four months behind schedule, will not take effect before next year. He said that Germany's failure to ratify the Schengen accord on free circulation within the EC and the absence of controls on drug shipments from The Netherlands made border controls necessary. Further, Italy had to strengthen checks at its borders before the accord could be implemented, he added.



Balladur: an EC fan from a divided party

Rasmussen confident Danes will vote 'yes'

FROM REUTERS IN COPENHAGEN

POUL Nyrup Rasmussen, the Danish prime minister, expressed confidence yesterday that Danes would vote "yes" in their second referendum on the Maastricht treaty on May 18 and gave a warning against another "no" result.

"I am very confident about a 'yes' result," he said after his weekly cabinet meeting.

Commenting on recent remarks by Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, that Britain might join the other European Community states in a new union treaty if Denmark rejected the Maastricht accord next month, Mr Rasmussen said: "It looks more and more obvious that the other EC countries would seek a new model for advancing European co-operation without Denmark after they got over the initial shock of a fresh Danish 'no'."

Mr Hurd said on Sunday that Britain might seek new political and economic co-operation in the Community if Danes voted against. His comments were seen by Danish observers as an apparent shift from London's previous insistence that Denmark should not be left behind.

"Mr Hurd's remarks underline the fact that anything other than a 'yes' would be a profoundly serious crisis for Denmark," Mr Rasmussen said. He described the foreign

secretary's remarks as "a death blow" to the "no" campaign. "I see his comments as confirming my fears that Denmark's negotiating position after another 'no' would be poor in the extreme."

Recent opinion polls show about 50 per cent of Danes favour the treaty, with 30 per cent opposed and the remainder undecided or abstaining.

Denmark's second referendum will be on an opt-out deal secured by Copenhagen at the EC's December summit in Edinburgh, exempting the country from Community plans for a joint defence policy, a common currency and union citizenship.

Stockholm: Mr Hurd said yesterday that he expected Danes to approve the Maastricht accord. If they did not, "the treaty would not proceed... We don't expect the Danish people to say 'no'. A Danish 'no' would create a serious situation," he said, adding that Community leaders would meet in the event of a rejection.

Mr Hurd also said that a detailed progress report on EC membership talks with Sweden, Norway, Finland and Austria was expected to be presented at the June summit. (AP)

Treaty row, page 10
Leading article, page 17

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Do you pen oppressed verse left-handed? Are you a cyberpunk bard? Kate Muir catches New York's beat poets of the nineties

Towards midnight a writer, wearing velvet and dreadlocks, hands over his caramel-coloured baby and heads for the platform at the Nuyorican Poets' Cafe. A woman trumpeter with two-inch metallic-blue finger-nails relinquishes the stage. In the Saturday crowd, beards abound. A vast décolletage shudders by, hidden only by suede fringes, but its owner — like everyone else here — is sure to be a serious artist. These are the New Bohemians, continuing where the beat poets left off. But for the lack of cigarette smoke, the room could come straight from the early sixties.

Like a rash, poetry has broken out across New York. On an average night, the poetry punter can locate 15 performances. Rather than attending dance clubs, it is all the rage for the young and hip (pie) to take part in readings which often combine rap, ethnic music and performance art with poems.

In a dubious part of the East Village known as Alphabet City, the Nuyorican (pronounced New-Yor-ek-an) Poets' Cafe is at its zenith. "It's happening," says the cafe's founder Miguel Algarin. "It's gonna be very hot," he says

referring to Saturday's show. "There's a lot of great activity. Performances. A 16-piece salsa band. But poetry... poetry is the living breath of the place."

This is indeed the case. Even the bathroom walls are dedicated to the art. "I'm not gonna suck/ On the blueprint of the air-conditioned gun," notes the ladies' room graffiti. The genre includes: "Tip-toeing on the sharp edge of a broken empire/ We speak with razor tongues."

For a \$5 entrance, who can find fault? Besides, where else can you wear sunglasses indoors without feeling out of place?

Later this week, the cafe has a special evening for left-handed poets only, as well as the usual mixed bag slots for feminist, Rastafarian, lesbian, rap, environmentalist, cyberpunk and even deaf poets, who perform in sign language. The menu is so culturally diverse it borders on mass schizophrenia.

This is where the New Bohemians differ from the be-bop and

Write on, you New Bohemians



Fifties originals: old-timers Allen Ginsberg, left, Jack Kerouac, centre, and William Burroughs

beat days. The flares and wooden chairs in dark brick-walled basements are much the same, but most of the beat poets were young white men looking for the anguish in their souls. Today, young white men lack street cred as poets since they are not sufficiently oppressed (special exceptions are made for homosexuals). In poetry "slams" — talent nights judged by the audience — the white male rates low on

beat days. The flares and wooden chairs in dark brick-walled basements are much the same, but most of the beat poets were young white men looking for the anguish in their souls. Today, young white men lack street cred as poets since they are not sufficiently oppressed (special exceptions are made for homosexuals). In poetry "slams" — talent nights judged by the audience — the white male rates low on

good, clean fun," says Jimmy Santiago, poet and film-maker.

Tonight it seems these poets are all talking about the experience of fatherhood, an alien concept to their predecessors like Allen Ginsberg, William Burroughs and Jack Kerouac. In a black felt hat, Santiago declaims new-mannishly about returning late at night to his cold living room, picking up his baby soo and holding him in "the

hot shade of my flesh." "Tonight my baby is he and I am me./ Tears salt to freezing in my heart and we melt into one."

Later, when discussing writing the screenplay for his film *Down by Honour*, about the experience of chicano families in America, he explains his enthusiasm: "Have you ever seen a baby in a crib filled with whipped cream? I dove into that with the ecstasy of a whale." Making the film, he modestly informs the audience, was "a huge, huge act of integrity."

Such upfront pretension fits easily into the wave of sixties nostalgia and grunge engulfing America. Not for nothing were there three biographies released this year of the eternally-stored "gonzo" writer Hunter S. Thompson, as well as a recent literary recreation of the famous Magic Bus trip (in both senses) taken by beat poets.

Poetry clubs are re-surfacing throughout New York to milk the new mood. New Bohemians can be spotted at the Moroccan-style

Fer club, the Elbo Room and the Nuyorican.

At the Cornelia Street Café in Greenwich Village, the cellar crowd on Sunday night is half Greek, listening to songs and English translations from the homosexual poet Constantine Cavafy, "on the 130th anniversary of his death and the 60th anniversary of his birth". This is also where singer Suzanne Vega tried out her poetry before she was officially discovered. The cafe was founded by a writer, a sculptor and an actor, and invites "bohemians and beatniks" to its daily "kolhrudatsch".

Trendsetters should note that the MTV pop channel has just run a series featuring seven New York poets who perform 30-second sound-bites of their greatest works.

That is a lot of bad poetry for one city. But the aspiring New Bohemian can take heart from the words of beatnik Ken Kesey, author of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Of the excesses of the Magic Bus tour he wrote: "Unless you get up very near that precipice where you're likely to make a fool of yourself, you're not showing much of how you feel. You're playing it safe."

Brand X puts the big names on the run

Famous labels now have surprising competitors, reports Paul Barker

"YOU'RE very welcome, Mr Bond," Halloran smiled and offered him a fresh pack of Luckies. "We want to make your stay comfortable. Anything you want, just say so and it's yours."

W hat James Bond wanted, and got from the FBI was "a swank tie-clip in the shape of a whip, an alligator-skin briefcase, a plain Zippo lighter, a plastic Travel-Pac containing razor, hairbrush and toothbrush, a pair of horn-rimmed glasses with plain lenses, various other odds and ends, and finally, a light-weight Hartmann Skymate suitcase to contain all these things."

Thus, Secret Agent 007 in 1954, in *Live and Let Die*, Bond was the Hero of the Brand Name. He has become a brand name himself, in films that bear less and less relation to the books Ian Fleming actually wrote. In this, he was an apt symbol of his times. He

relative affluence. Your friendly corner-shop grocer was probably, in real life, selling soap that would take the skin off your face.

Enter William Lever, with his Sunlight soap, or Pears & Co., with its omnipresent re-production of Millais's *Bubbles*. People bought brand names, not just because of the vast and innovative advertising, but because they were a genuine improvement.

Brand names and their advertising campaigns have been the true People's Poetry. "Even your closest friends won't tell you" (Listerine, 1920s); "We are the Ovaltines, happy girls and boys" (1930s); "Can you tell Stork from butter?" (1950s); "Let your fingers do the walking" (Bell's Yellow Pages, 1960s); "American Express... That'll do nicely, sir" (1970s); "The roan from Del Monte says Yes" (1980s). All these have made it into the *Oxford Dictionary of Modern Quotations*.

Brand names are not, of course, about to fade away altogether. The top is still the top. Vanity Fair photographs Annette Bening and tells us that "she is sitting pretty in a dress by Jill Sander and shoes by Bennis Warren Edwards". These are brand names for insiders, not for the rest of us.

On television and in the cinema, brand name commercials have entered a stage of *fin de siècle* decadence. They tell you a little story, a romance for a 1990s, about a lager, a make of jeans, or a car. They are full of exquisite, highly roanierist photography. In the background thunders blues music from the 1950s. They need that tribute to the heyday of the consumer age to give the ad an emotional power at all. Otherwise, it is enraptured by its own cleverness. It is unconvinced that the brand name, on its own, will sell.

And quite right, too. Competition and safety regulations have made most cars, for example, almost identical. They even have the same shape. By the same process, own-brand products have crept up from their old perception as slightly cheaper and slightly worse.

We are no longer prepared to leave the past alone. We colour-tint old classic films, like Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*. We re-write Enid Blyton. I can see it coming:

"Bond finished his Safeway muesli, slipped on his M&S loafers, and checked that his silver hip flask was well topped up with Sainsbury's best Scotch. He peered out of the window before he left. There was something odd about the man on the other side of the street. At a glance, he seemed like a gentleman, but he was smoking a Marlboro, and his tie looked like one of Liberty's. He had to be an impostor."

No brands for Bond, next time around. You have to draw the social line somewhere.



Advertising campaigns have been the People's Poetry

This Cold War, like the political variety, was also won by the West. When communism collapsed, it released a huge, pent-up longing for Levi jeans, Marlboro cigarettes, Pepsi. But now, it seems, the brand war victors may be starting to walk away from the spoils. Worried by competition from American stores' own-brand cigarettes, Philip Morris this month cut the price of Marlboro by 20 per cent. In Britain, Safeway is running a special promotion based on the notion that own-brand products are starting to creep ahead of manufacturers' brands. Already 40 per cent of Safeway's sales are own-brand. This week, if you buy Alpine muesli or Philous Fogg tortilla chips, you get a packet of the cheaper Safeway version free, to woo you over.

Marks & Spencer is Safeway's acknowledged model. The classic fifties underwear ad was "I dreamed I raced with the wind in my Maidenform bra". For many years now, British breasts have heaved mainly inside a St Michael's. And the M&S food shelves are increasingly a gourmet's delight.

Yet — and here's the cultural rub — M&S food is often dearer than its branded competitor. If you want to shop cheap, you go round the corner from Marks & Spencer, where KwikSave flourishes by offering Heinz baked beans and White's cream soda to all corners. Is the brand name starting on a historic slide downhill?

It will be an ironic fate, if it is. Brand names began, in the 19th century, as a guarantee of quality for the masses. They flourished as the working class started to pull itself up into

the Fifth Amendment, the Fourteenth Amendment, and the Ninth Amendment — the first two of which concern due process, and the last which merely announces that there are rights not mentioned in the Bill of Rights that the people still possess.

Whether one of these unmentioned rights was the right to abortion on demand was not discussed, nor was the rather obvious point that the creature most likely to be deprived of life and liberty without due process of law was the fetus rather than the mother. Instead, the court decided "privacy" implied a right to abortion, and the next matter was to balance the interests of the mother in being able to terminate a pregnancy with the state's interest in protecting "human life".

Once the court had reached that point, it was not difficult to decide that the state's interests in protecting life got stronger as the fetus became more nearly a baby, while the mother's interests in ending the pregnancy for anything other than preventing a threat to her own life became weaker. The court could then produce as a matter of constitutional law the policy of allowing abortion at will in the first trimester and requiring increasingly strong grounds for abortion thereafter.

But because America has no national health service, there could be no national regulation of how and where abortion was performed, and no way of ensuring that the "right" to an abortion meant anything to the hard up. For the past ten years or so, America has been paying the price — safe abortion is effectively unavailable to the poor, patchily available in most of rural America, and poorly integrated with gynaecological health care generally.

Irreconcilable differences

The gap between extremists on abortion and euthanasia will not be bridged by invoking the sanctity of life, argues Alan Ryan

Professor Dworkin's reflections in yesterday's *Times* on abortion and euthanasia are as interesting as anything he has ever written. But they strike oddly on an English ear, and not very persuasively.

Dworkin takes the arrival in Britain of Don Treshman and Rescue America as a sign that the compromise over abortion law, worked out in 1967 and reaffirmed several times since, has broken down. From the American side of the Atlantic, it has looked more significant that the British government promptly threw Treshman out of the country as a threat to public order. The greatest difference between Britain and America is the ability of the British government to make compromise stick; what public opinion is ready to accept in the two countries is not very different.

In America, things took

disorderly because in many localities public opinion, local law makers, local police and local judges are fiercely anti-choice, much as they are fiercely anti-homosexual and fiercely hostile to most kinds of secular, liberal thinking. How far the federal government can go in enforcing women's access to abortion clinics is debatable as a matter of law.

Most issues of law and order are matters for the local police, not federal agents, and protest is a constitutional right — and touchy as a matter of politics. Presidents do not want to alienate their supporters in Congress, and members of Congress are much more sensitive to the passions of their constituents than MPs.

The recent rise in tempera-

ture in the American debate has much to do with the change in administration. The anti-choice camp has lost its friends in the White House, and is not pleased. Whether their rage is well founded is another matter. President Clinton has withdrawn the Bush administration's decree that federally funded birth-control clinics could not even talk about abortion; how much further he will go is anybody's guess. He wants to overturn the legislation that forbids hospitals spending federal funds on abortion, but even an overwhelmingly Democratic Congress is not sure it can be done.

To an English eye, the peculiarity of American controversy is the distance be-

tween rhetoric and public opinion. The public is broadly in favour of women being able to secure abortion, and not in favour of children being able to do it without reference to their parents or some plausible stand-in; and not at all happy with the fire-bombing and other antics of the pro-life extremists, nor with the pro-choice rhetoric of their opponents. They would, so far as anyone can tell, readily settle for the law as it has been in Britain for the past 25 years.

What is much less clear is that they would settle for a compromise in the terms offered by Dworkin. One would think that announcing that the battle really is over the sanctity of life is pouring kerosene on the conflagration. It is exactly because they take their stand on the sanctity of life that the pro-life movement is so insistent that a fetus is a person at conception, and it is because they can see where the sanctity of life argument leads that pro-choice leaders have stuck unyieldingly to a woman's right to choose.

Dworkin's argument comes trailing the American Constitution in its wake. The Supreme Court has had a hard time applying the Constitution to the sexual revolution of the past 30 years, and nowhere has it had a harder time than over abortion. In 1965, the court decided that a Connecticut statute against contraception violated the Fourth Amendment. This amendment prohibited unwarrantable search and seizure, and originated during the reign of George III in attempts to secure the printers of opposition papers and pamphlets against raids by government agents. Grasping at whatever they could, the justices decided that it reflected a general "right to privacy" that the constitution did not mention. In *Roe versus Wade*, the Court waved a hand towards

THE RIGHT TO LIFE: A TIMES/DILLONS DEBATE

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WHAT are the rights and wrongs of abortion and euthanasia? Who has the right to decide? Ronald Dworkin, professor of law at New York and professor of jurisprudence at Oxford, leads this *Times/Dillons* debate: when do we have the right to end a life?

Author of *Life's Dominion*, Professor Dworkin will be supported in his "pro-choice" views by Dr Steve Jones, head of genetics and biometry at University College. Challenging them will be David Alton, MP, and Mary Kenny, the journalist and broadcaster.

It takes place on May 18 at 7.30pm at the Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1E. Readers of *The Times* can obtain tickets either by completing the coupon below, calling at Dillons the Bookstore, 82 Gower Street, London WC1E, phoning Dillons on 071-915 6613, or faxing on 071-580 7680.

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حكمة من القرآن

City that sets its own trends



The Lakota club: gauzy dresses with clumpy shoes, funny woollen hats, beads and grunge may now be high style, but in Bristol flares have always lurked beneath the surface

Unpretentious Bristol, with its unwashed hair, its grunge, rasta and raves, and its whiff of joss sticks, is back in fashion. Alice Thomson reports

Saturday night at the Lakota club in Montpellier, Bristol, and Emma is squatting against a pounding wall in a pair of satin straps, flared jeans and leather waistcoat talking to her friend, tie-dye bell-bottomed Nick. Outside Mark and Ian dressed in loon pants are eating fish and chips while they discuss whether they can be bothered to apply for the Hong Kong police force. They let the warm rain course down their rat-tailed hair.

Bristol is principally noted for riots at St Paul's, suicides at the Clifton suspension bridge and Harveys Bristol Cream, the best known remnant of Bristol's trading past. Jane Austen pretty much ignored its tourists still do. Always being touted as the next big financial centre or music scene, it never quite happens.

But if Bristolians have seemed a little chirpier of late or slightly springier of step, it is with some reason. Suddenly their native look has put them back on the style map. Ralph Lauren may have only just discovered gauzy dresses with clumpy shoes, funny woollen hats, beads and grunge. But in Bristol flares have always lurked beneath the surface and joss sticks have been burning secretly in bedrooms. Bristol youth has never had a hair-do and usually looks a little ragged around the edges, mixing spangly Lurex trousers with Marks & Spencer's cardigans. They are pale creatures who would hate to look obviously successful. If anywhere can claim to be the San Francisco of Britain, it is Bristol.

It probably has something to do with the ley lines. Bristol lies at the centre of the New Age traveller trail, half way between Arthurian Glastonbury and Celtic Wales. This means that the mystical rather

than the practical flourishes, and young Bristolians tend to share a broad vegetarian-Green ideology. Walking up Park Row in central Bristol, you first come to a crystal shop, a fortune teller, a juggling shop, a barometer shop and The Organic Food And Farming Centre. The Caribbean influence adds a touch of the exotic and a strong bass beat to Bristol's rhythm.

Plastic surgeons, personal trainers and Nautilus machines are not Bristol. Raves, where young people gather in a barn one stop up the motorway for an evening of vigorous, self-expression, are. And where else would people spend weekends playing competition dominos or dressing up as Eric the Red on the Downs?

All this takes place against a civilised backdrop of decaying Georgian crescents, Victorian tobacco warehouses and Quaker buildings. The centre of Bristol, rebuilt after the war as one vast shopping complex, seems utterly at odds with all its surroundings. Trendy Bristolians live in Kingsdown, Montpellier and St Paul's. They go to Daphne's Cafe for mushrooms on toast and bicycle to work along the cobbles. Convinced that grunge started here amid the decaying pot plants and tofu dog food, they use their flatmate's toothbrush to clean their finger nails and wear genuine cheesecloth shirts.

Samantha Sheffield, a fine

art student at the University of the West of England, is coming up for her degree show. "It's worth making an effort to say hello to people in Bristol. Everyone is very unsmug and unrich. In London most people don't know what a community centre is. Here the community centres have some of the best music and clubs," she says.

Venue the City's listing magazine, is down in Montpellier. "Bristolians have always been as into dance as Manchester. Only it's not in your face; the music is more subtle and there is a long tradition of reggae. This is the second oldest black community in Britain," says music editor John Mitchell. "People say we are introverted but Bristol is the centre of the West Country. Swindon, Exeter, and the Forest of Dean all rely on us for their entertainment. We may not have night clubs that compare to London but we do like to party in the fields. All the biggest rave organisers come from Bristol."

The Moon Flowers are typical of psychedelic Bristol bands. They give the impression of being shambling, acidy hippies, but in fact they are quietly making a small packet with their own label, Pop God records. Massive Attack, another Bristol band, has been more overtly successful, having won best album and single of the year in *The Face* magazine. Their music is an amalgam of contemporary

hip-hop and vintage reggae, and their backgrounds a mixture of Spanish, Jamaican and Italian.

Soft-spoken rapper Robert (3-D) Del Naja was brought up in the city. "Bristol is so laid back that no one ever accuses us in clubs. Making a record here is less hectic but most bands in Bristol never quite get round to it," he says. "I just wish Bristolians made an effort to promote Bristol. The press here really lack enthusiasm. They think all we have is Brunel but there is no shortage of talent. Bath is like a doll's house. You are scared to break anything. In Bristol people let themselves go."

Bristol's enthusiasms tend to be a little different. Skate boards and graffiti are a part of the city. Throughout the day, children in baggy trousers traipse into Rollermania, a skateboard mecca. They come from all round Britain to skate at the new Lloyds Building and the old skate parks, and to read *Bugs and Drugs*, a Bristol magazine. "At the moment they are all into low-slung pants cut short at the ankle and huge work shirts. Bristolians are superb at the never-washed-my-hair look," says Lou Coffey, the shop's owner.

One person who is trying to get Bristol to let go a little more is Liz Lewitt, Bristol's most established designer. "Bristol fashion bewilders me. It's a weird mix of rave, rasta hats and crocheted tops with a dash of Barbour from the University." To cater for Bristol's more exotic tastes, Miss Lewitt runs a club called Spank once a month. "It's relaxed here, but rather small-minded and you can't be too obvious. It's more embarrassing being

yourself in a small city," she says.

So how do the students fit into all this? Bristol University student union, Britain's most carefree carbuncle, may be the largest student complex in Europe but at 6pm it is probably also the most deserted. Leaflets announce the scouts and guides will be playing Trivial Pursuits in Badock while the Catholic chaplaincy will host a toga party and slave auction.

Bristol students are white, middle-class and usually more interested in the Old Etonian Subbuteo League than the next rave. Arriving in October with new cheque books and old aspirations they soon become acclimatised. The dull thud of rain sweeps into their collective consciousness and

they slip into Bristol's special sodden rhythm. Only clean hair and new South American jumpers give them away.

Nicholas White, 26, is one of those students who never left Bristol. He now works at the BBC. "I prefer it here because there are no pretensions. It may not be the centre of the universe but it is more manageable and secure and it's surprisingly diverse. London always leaves me shattered," he says. "Here the restaurants never change, students can live in Georgian squares and there's loads of cinema and theatre."

At the moment everyone is wearing a slice of Bristol's grunge. The difference is that when the fashion cognoscenti have decided to look like they are winning again and fashion editors have repainted their nails and moved on to a glossier, shinier world, young Bristolians will still be burning those joss sticks.

Welcome to the dandy



RACHEL KELLY

I am delighted that Chanel is to sell men's Y-fronts in London, and to learn that there is a waiting list for the £80 white cotton and Lycra knickers with their double 'C' logo. It is a shame these are intended only for women — men I have spoken to fancy a pair themselves. After a dreary decade when the greatest fashion statement a man could make was wearing a pair of red braces, the dandy is back.

The 1990s dandy is happy to grow his hair long (spot the growing number of pony-tails); preen himself, shown in the growth in men's toiletries; read about fashion — witness the men's style magazines such as *GQ*; and buy outrageous ties: Tie Rack's best-selling lines are kipper oes in flamboyant colours.

These are small signs to be sure, and most men's wardrobes are still dominated by serried ranks of monochrome suits. Apart from a little spurt in the 1960s, when fashion burst into life with kipper ties and flares and flowery shirts, men's fashion has been austere for far too long. But designers should seize the moment. The 1980s has been a slow preparation for the return of the peacock, a process delayed only by the recession.

What fun it is when it's okay for men to dress up. And it adds to the list of Christmas presents that women can choose for their menfolk. It really is too boring to have only handkerchiefs, socks or Gucci ties to choose from.

A trip round the National Portrait Gallery reminds us of what men are missing out on: here is Sir Walter Raleigh, with a pearl in one ear and a cloak as valuable as his entire estates thrown down in front of Queen

Elizabeth; there is Samuel Pepys, showing off his elaborate new wig.

Step through the 18th century and the materials remain fantastic: the colours luxuriant and the jewels dazzling, culminating in the Regency dandies: the Prince Regent with his buckskin trousers and well-turned calf.

By the mid-19th century, the black and white of Victorian austerity predominate. A sneering public-school suspicion of anything which smacked of vanity grew up and remains to this day. Long trousers, introduced in the French revolution, and jackets and ties became the norm, with school and club ties acting as semaphore for middle-class respectability.

Yet men's fashion could be so much more adventurous. Why shouldn't men wear skirts? I remember the plaintive cry of a cousin of mine, aged four: "Why can't I wear a skirt, Mummy?" His mother had no convincing reply. Women, after all, have hijacked huge areas of men's clothing — witness the Princess of Wales's dashing appearance in a dinner jacket.

We have much to learn from the East. Maharajahs have no qualms about dressing as dramatically as their wives, and selecting from trousers, or skirts or breeches as their whim takes them. Western men should have similar freedom of choice.

A new Oscar Wilde is needed to lead us from the dreariness of most of men's fashions. Now is the time for more colourful characters like those in Gilbert and Sullivan. Why, they might even wear the new Chanel underpants.

A relaxed Princess of Wales may have put eating problems behind her

Sustained by a lighter heart

THE address to an international conference on eating disorders yesterday was the first formal acknowledgement by the Princess of Wales that she has been a victim of bulimia, although she stopped short of a full confession.

But she appeared to be describing her own exceptionally stressful life when she told delegates that anorexia and bulimia have at their core a far deeper problem than mere female vanity, and are more likely to spring from unhappiness in childhood, and the self-doubt and uncertainties that accompany adolescence.

In 1960 the princess's mother gave birth to a son who lived only a few hours. Eighteen months later Diana was born, and it has been speculated that she spent her early years feeling a poor substitute for the male heir her parents wanted. When she was only six, her mother walked out and her parents went through a particularly acrimonious divorce.

At the time of her engagement in 1981, Lady Diana Spencer appeared a healthy, even plump, 19-year-old with a penchant for chocolate bars. She is said to have hated her official engagement photograph and, in common with many a bride-to-be, went on a severe slimming campaign.

According to Andrew Morton, whose book *Diana: Her True Story* appears the most reliable available chronicle of her side of the marriage, her problems began shortly afterwards. He reports: "She was frequently found raiding the refrigerator at Highgrove late in the



No full confession: the princess

evening, and once starved a footman by eating an entire steak and kidney pie when she was staying at Windsor Castle. Her friend Rory Scott remembers her eating a 1 lb bag of sweets in short order during a bridge evening, while her admission that she ate a bowl of custard before she went to bed added to the perplexity concerning her diet."

When the royal family eat in public, they merely toy with their food; the Queen pushes morsels around her plate but little of it appears ever to reach her mouth. The reason is not illness but etiquette: stoking fuel is not seen to be a

regal thing to be doing. Not so the princess. An American society hostess recalls being "horrified", during one of the princess's trips to America, at her table manners. "She literally shovelled the food into her mouth with her fingers, then after licking them clean noisily announced, 'God I'm hungry'. We were all stunned."

SUCH behaviour is entirely symptomatic of bulimics, and the hostess, had she been more aware of her guest's condition, might have offered sympathy rather than dismay.

The strains on the princess during the last 12 years have been enormous. While living in a patently unhappy marriage she became the most photographed woman in the world, an icon of beauty and elegance. She performed wonders hiding any illness while on public view, although those who travelled with her regularly can recall incidents when she felt unwell during a public engagement and had to retire briefly, and on one occasion a full-blown faint.

The last year has seen the greatest strains of all, but now that the princess is separated she appears more at ease with herself, healthier, and much more likely to follow a normal eating routine. In the way she lavishes love and care on her children (though boys, admittedly, are less likely to suffer eating disorders) she appears determined not to visit on them the tribulations of her own life.

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Alan Coren



■ Half time is as good as any to have a shot at my own obituary

On the day you die, what do you want people to say about you? Well, yes, of course, you want them to say, "My God, 108, what a great innings!", but what do you want them to say next? How do you wish to be remembered? For your achievements? For your character? Or for some dark, undignified feature, be it never so tiny, which, whenever your name is posthumously mentioned, instantly rings a bell and throws up an image, much in the manner of an ancient cash-register?

The odds, I have to tell you, are on the latter; history will see to that. Clio is a mischievous little operator, and can never resist fixing it so that, if, say, you burned cakes, fled up an oak tree, required Hardy to kiss you or Bognor to be bugged, such minutiae will popularly supersede anything else. Which is why my heart goes out, today, not only to the late Sir Ian Jacob, but to me.

Yesterday, *The Daily Telegraph* ran an obituary of Sir Ian, into whose 93 years so many enterprises of great pith and moment had been packed — intellectual powerhouse of Churchill's wartime cabinet, DG of the BBC, subsequent chairman, trustee, director, of almost everything else — that, as I read, I found myself wondering what immortal clincher the obituarist would pick to leave us with in summing up so seeming a public life. It was this: "In India, he shot big game, narrowly failing to bag a tiger." I read this several times; I could not decide it. The obituarist had chosen not only to sign off a life of almost unprecedented achievement with the one thing unachieved, but also to offer us an image which, for one, will henceforth find ineradicable. Whenever Sir Ian's name is uttered, I shall see only the bespectacled and balding figure in the *Telegraph* mugshot, ineptly emptying his Remington from the top of an elephant, while something striped lopes gratefully away.

Which, mind, is still only a fragment of the picture. What does his chronicler mean by "narrowly failing"? Is that a good thing, or a bad? I mean, was it a risky shot, eg. a cheap gun, a nervous elephant, a titchy tiger, or did Sir Ian, perhaps, broadly succeed in bagging something else in error, a bear, a nawab, a, worst of all, cow? We may never know, but I think some of us may think of little else for some considerable time.

I shall, because, as I hinted, this comes very close to home. At 54, I have reached half my allotted span, and not unnaturally begun to wonder what a bereft world may one day make of me. Now, it so happens that in 1966, my wife and I were charged by the Ford Motor Company with taking their very first Transit on a proving run through the northern Sahara, and because there were just the two of us, and having read *Beau Geste*, I knew the desert to be an inimical spot. I persuaded Rochester Row to issue me with a firearms certificate and Cogswell & Harrison to sell me a Walther 9mm automatic, so that should a horde of armed Touaregs suddenly descend upon us, I should be able to spring from my vehicle, draw my pistol, and give it to them as a present.

They never materialised; two months later, as we drove through the outskirts of Cairo, the gun was still under my seat. At which point, a dog suddenly somersaulted above the car in front and rolled into the gutter; the driver did not stop, but we did, and got out, and the dog was in as bad shape as a dog can get, and my wife said, "Shoot it!"

I don't know why it should be so hard to put a dog out of its misery, all I know is that it took a full clip, by which time most of suburban Cairo was on the street yelling, and since there was no way of proving we had acted not from malice but from pity it was the tenth anniversary of Suez, and were anyone to take it into his head that the British were celebrating this with a revenge mission targeted on household pets, we should soon be in worse nick than the dog), we leapt smartly back aboard and drove to the nearest police station to explain, a matter involving several hundred forms and the British vice-consul.

They do not keep things to themselves, diplomats when, a week later, we dropped into the Damascus embassy, our man said, "Oh yes, you're that silly arse who shot a dog in Egypt." Which is why I put it on the record now. It might stop someone else dragging it up in 54 years' time.

Patients should see the records of particular operations in particular hospitals, says Dr Thomas Stuttford

Don't cover up for second-rate surgeons

A decade ago, when I saw an analysis of the quality of surgical care in England, one statistic stuck in my mind: that a heart bypass operation was ten times more risky if carried out in one of our famous northern teaching hospitals than if it was done in one of the London teaching hospitals. In those days the only teaching hospital that could boast figures comparable to the London ones was Southampton.

It is interesting that the University Hospital in Southampton has maintained its reputation, and that in the figures reported in *The Times* yesterday of the death-rate following general surgery (mainly abdominal operations) is less than a third of that which might be expected. Once a tradition of excellence has been created, it becomes perpetuating and younger doctors feel privileged to join it.

A reassuring statistic not in yesterday's report is that 99.3 per cent of all patients who go into hospital in England for surgery will leave alive. British surgery is as safe as any in the world, due in part to the close checks on the training and selection of surgeons by the Royal College of Surgeons, and in part to our high standards of anaesthesia.

Anaesthetists, junior doctors and theatre nursing staff are fully aware of which surgeons are most consistently successful, but it is difficult to define the

qualities that make a good operator. Experience is important, particularly if it includes working with one of the masters of the craft in a famous unit, but however practised some surgeons become, it is all too often apparent to bystanders that their patients still fall to do well.

If a surgeon is bad because he is drunk, idle, absentee or pre-senile, it is comparatively easy to replace him; but it is difficult, if not impossible, to remove somebody who is conscientious but whose patients consistently do less well than expected. The surgeon may be quite unable to say why their own patients do badly while others do well. In a good, well-known hospital the damage done by a poor surgeon, who may be academically bright but for some reason a bad diagnostician, a clumsy operator or have a suspect judgment, can be minimised by his team. Many a consultant surgeon who is a sub-

standard clinician has been so well supported by a skilful and tactful senior registrar that patients have not suffered. However, a bad surgeon operating in a third-rate hospital will not have the benefit of a select supporting staff, and then patients may suffer.

In judging a surgeon it is impossible to rely on statistics alone. They can be misleading, for it is difficult to be certain that the cases surgeons see are comparable. In the past this mattered less; one of the hallmarks of the good GP was that he was able to select the best surgeon for his patient, even though this process may have meant that some surgeons had full lists while others were comparatively under-employed and spent a lifetime dealing with surgical trivia.

In the new, financially orientated, National Health Service, money as well as the patient's good is becoming an important factor. A contract between a

practice and a hospital is just that: local doctors no longer have the same freedom to pick and choose the surgeons for their patients, for they are limited to those working within hospitals with which they have a contract. In private practice there is still total freedom of choice.

Not only do surgeons vary in their overall quality, but even the experts are more expert in some operations than others. For instance, one genito-urinary surgeon may have made the bladder and urethra his area of expertise, whereas another may be more interested in the prostate. The changes in the health service mean that soon it will only be when a GP is advising his private patients (or those honorary private patients, his own family, who often enjoy many of the privileges of private patients) that he will be able to select the best surgeon for the job on clinical rather than financial grounds.

The secretary of state, in her emphasis on the citizen's charter and the frills of medical care, may be doing medicine a disservice. Everybody hopes to see politeness and punctuality, but these worthy virtues become insignificant when compared to the difference between living and dying. It would be ludicrous, if it weren't dangerous, to publish a league table based on medical practice which nevertheless omitted what the patient really needs to know: how likely he or she is to leave hospital alive.

Wide discrepancies in the death rate from comparable operations on patients from similar social backgrounds have always been disturbing — and always obvious to local doctors. But, amazingly, although some individual specialists keep records, there are no national statistics of the how the death rate for particular operations varies from unit to unit, only the all-embracing figures published yesterday. Yet we know, for instance, that the death rate from gall-bladder disease or appendicitis, differs from hospital to hospital.

The quality of surgery does vary. The idea that one hip replacement or bypass, for instance, is much like another is a dangerous one. For it is just possible that a certain surgeon at a particular hospital has spare capacity because the local GPs know that the hospital is second-rate and its surgery poor.

Another triumph for outrage

The publicity accorded to Saturday's bomb was overwhelming, and helpful only to those who seek to reap the harvest of terror

As wise general always asks, what does the enemy want me to do next — and tries to do the opposite. So how did the IRA want Britain to react to last weekend's Bishopsgate bomb? The answer, I fear, is to do exactly what we did.

After last month's Warrington debacle, the IRA did not particularly want to kill. It wanted to cause damage and garner publicity for its renewed effectiveness. It wanted not just to terrorise people but, as with last year's Leadenhall bomb, to terrorise business. The bomb was a massive economic sanction, intended to goad politicians and police into frightening and embattling London as they have embattled Belfast.

The effectiveness of terrorism lies not in the act but in the reaction. Conrad's secret agent, "frail, insignificant, shabby, a pest in a street full of men", understood this well. He could sow violence, but he needed publicity and the public to reap the harvest of terror. If people shrugged and turned away, there was no terror and no effect.

Not even the world's most bomb-proofed city of Belfast, can prevent such explosions. (Two large car bombs breached Belfast's iron curtain last year, barely noted outside the city). Good intelligence and policing can catch some bombers; but the more one cell is thwarted, the more determined another will be to succeed. Mowing does not rid a lawn of weeds. What Londoners could do, but what their leaders cannot seem to permit, is deny the terrorist his harvest of reaction.

The publicity accorded to Saturday's bomb was overwhelming. For not one but three days, it all but swept Russia, Britain's economic recovery, even Bosnia off the front pages. The metropolitan media conformed to its old rule-of-thumb, that a London atrocity is worth five Manchester atrocities, ten Belfast ones. 20 in Europe and 100 in China. It was not just the prolonged publicity and clichéd condemnations that must have delighted the IRA. It was the content of the reaction. The BBC sternly told an official that "you can take two of these bombs but you cannot take three". I heard an ITV reporter trilling that "life in the City cannot be the same again".

Newspapers telephoned financiers around the world to ask "aren't you frightened of London?" The *Financial Times* induced Sir William Pures, the head of the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank, to warn that "the IRA's weekend bomb could undermine London's chances of being chosen as the home for the future European central bank". London's chance is anyway close to zero. Why give such gratuitous credit to an IRA bomb?

The vultures were close behind. Not a newscast was without a security consultant advertising his wares: video cameras, laminated glass, executive bodyguards, security gates, car exclusion zones, police checkpoints. Companies howled for government compensation. St Bartholomew's Hospital howled to be



Armed standoff in Ulster: is anyone really working to change the status quo?

kept open for next time. "Is it not just a matter of money?" some fool asked the City police chief, Owen Kelly. More than money, replied that shrewd policeman. "In this open, free society" — he almost spat the words — "anybody could drive a bomb into any part of the City." Any stick will do to beat a dog. The police, said Mr Kelly, needed extra powers to set up stop-and-search checkpoints at will. The time had come for an overhaul of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act.

Special Branch began to leak against M15. The Metropolitan police leaked against the City police. By yesterday the press had them all at each other's throats — an unlooked for bonus for the IRA. Professor Paul Wilkinson of Aberdeen called for police supervision of boarding houses and hotels. The beguiling equation was proffered, that the hundreds of millions the explosion cost the City might have been better spent on security. If money could stop the IRA, it would have vanished long ago.

As in Bosnia, the cry goes up that something must be done. Like what? London bombs are about publicity; they are a promotional venture to further the

Simon Jenkins

IRA's campaign against any Northern Ireland settlement unpropitious to itself, which means any feasible one. Do we censor publicity? The censor is a bad weapon of war, even counter-terrorist war. But the most effective counter to a London bomb is self-restraint, to report it like a Belfast bomb, then ignore it. Some hope!

On any available measure, London is one of Europe's safest cities in which to work. Few executives feel the need of private bodyguards or work in windowless offices. The kidnapping or murder of businessmen is unknown. No suburban estates are fortified with the guards, dogs and fences seen in the wealthy suburbs of New York, Madrid and Rome. The

IRA has been granted few such concessions, the gates to Downing Street (promptly vaulted by a rocket) being one.

To do what both the IRA and the security industry now want and make London more like Belfast would be a catastrophe. It would make the British "think security every day", which means think afraid. It would be a triumph for terror. The resulting exasperation might lead to the return of internment, which caused the surge in IRA recruitment in the 1970s. President Clinton would be encouraged to send a "peace envoy", who would doubtless honour Sinn Féin with a meeting. This is what the Bishopsgate bomb was really about, not about smashing capitalism.

Ever since the British government lost the will to impose power-sharing on Belfast's politicians almost 20 years ago, it conceded the IRA a *de facto* veto on a settlement. What is termed "the permanent stalemate scenario" is holding. This accepts the present low-level conflict as preferable to any alternative. The degeneration of Northern Irish politics, the paramilitary gang wars, the continued stigma on Britain's image as a civilised

community are all a small price to pay for not having to worry about Ulster.

Every time I go to Belfast, I receive the customary briefing that "we are winning the war against terrorism". There follows a list of arrests, arms seizures and convictions. But the war is not being won. It is merely not being lost. It has been stabilised. Each time I go, the security industry has sold the government a more extravagant piece of armour to counter the faults in the last piece — like the troubled border crossing pillboxes. Each time, a new British minister jokes about his "learning curve" and settles into the shoes of a direct rule that nobody now calls temporary. Indeed direct rule is increasingly identified with British sovereignty. Its ending by means of some form of devolution might thus imply a "British withdrawal" and so is unthinkable as long as violence continues.

Margaret Thatcher played safe. She had no policy for Northern Ireland. From the moment of Airey Neave's murder, she would hear nothing of the place. So long as the cost was containable, it could siew in its own juice. John Major came to office determined to force the pace and instructed the present secretary of state, Sir Patrick Mayhew, accordingly. Sir Patrick tugged at the sword in the stone, but it would not budge. He let others dictate his timing, and in Ireland that leads straight to the bog.

Everybody has an interest in the stalemate. The IRA does not want devolution or power-sharing. These would give more patronage to the hated SDLP, and possibly unleash the untethered mercies of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, in cahoots with the Irish police. So violence directs the agenda. There is always an outrage to secure a delay. British ministers know that violence in Ireland is a random variable: is tribal rather than political, and not susceptible to negotiation. Were Gerry Adams won over, somebody else would "go unofficial". But it suits ministers to say "no settlement without an end to violence". A brave reformist in Northern Ireland would disregard the bombs and murders, leave them to the police and intelligence services, remove them from the equation. He would try to end the security syndrome, propagate normality, starve the paramilitaries of money, proceed as near as possible as if they did not exist. But the proconsuls of Stormont are there to hold a line. The Treasury will give the money. They can denounce atrocities. They can cheer on peace movements. But they must not damage the stalemate. And meanwhile the IRA will go on bombing London for as long as we show it hurts us.

I suppose some future generation will force political change down the throats of the Irish. Ours is simply standing guard over the mess. But to spend millions fortifying London against that mess is worse than a waste of money. It is a victory for terror.

Out of puff

A SMOKE-FREE zone has been declared at the Kinnock household in west London, where the former Labour leader spends much of his time gardening, between television and radio appearances. Neil Kinnock has finally snuffed out the hot air he has been puffing for a considerable number of years: he has given up smoking the pipe, apparently at the insistence of his wife.

Glenys Kinnock, herself a former smoker, declared her domestic victory this week when she helped launch the Children's Charter for Freedom Against Tobacco. Her husband, who has reduced his alcohol intake considerably since resigning as Labour leader, has not put pipe to lip for a full four weeks. Kinnock was always careful not to smoke in front of the cameras when he was leader, but he enjoyed pulling out his tobacco pouch when relaxing. Friends say he is putting a brave face on the new pipeless regime.

He used to light up in a

reflective moment," said Adam Ingram, who was Kinnock's parliamentary private secretary. "He wasn't a heavy smoker, though he would puff away quite happily. I am glad that he has packed in."

But in serious pipe-smoking circles, his company will be missed. "I am just sad that, for whatever reason, the former Leader of the Opposition has quit," said Mike Butler, Secretary of the Pipe Smokers' Council.

Fred Trueman, the former England cricketer and an inveterate pipe-smoker, is surprised that anyone should wish to stop. "I have been smoking my pipe for 46 years and have no intention of stopping."

But does Mrs Trueman object? "She has never said so. Although I am not surprised Neil Kinnock has given up. Look at Mrs Kinnock."

● The latest attempt by the Liberal Democrats to save education secretary John Patten commands slightly less

authority than, perhaps, it might.

The party's education spokesman, Don Foster, who thoroughly relished the humiliation Patten suffered after he mis-spelt "sincerely" in a letter to a headmaster, has just sent out a press release with the headline: "Can Patten Reach Even the Lowest Level? Within the space of

Patently obvious mistakes



150 words, Foster manages three basic spelling errors.

Next goal?

ALTHOUGH his links with football may now be severed, Brian Clough is being touted



DIARY

as a future politician in some circles. Yesterday, 18 Labour MPs tabled a motion in the House of Commons acknowledging Clough's contribution to football. Now, he is being wooed by Labour to stand for a post in local government.

Clough is a committed socialist who has regularly given hard-pressed miners free or cheap tickets to football games, and in the early 1970s he nearly stood as Labour parliamentary candidate for the safe Tory seat of Richmond in York.

Nottingham Labour party says it would very much welcome Clough's return to political form. Ron Stevenson, city organiser for the Labour party, says: "He would have a lot of support if he decided to throw his hat into the ring. I think it is fair to say that

he would have a head start." But Derby is equally keen, according to Neil Emmott, the local agent. "If Brian Clough wished to stand he would have a lot of enthusiastic support and would be an asset to the Labour party." Clough may be gutted to be leaving the game of two halves, but he once professed an ambition to be prime minister. He is an unpredictable fellow and a political resurrection cannot be discounted. Remember — it's a funny old game, politics.

● The City of London is not the only area of the capital where police security needs some improvement. Neil Derbyshire, the crime reporter on *The Daily Telegraph*, went to New Scotland Yard for a briefing about the bomb on Monday. While he was there, someone stole his raincoat.

Try Canary Wharf

WITH the inestimable benefit of hindsight, the choice of prize could not have been more unfortunate. Lot 129 in an auction to raise money for Southwell Cathedral in Nottinghamshire is "a visit for two to the NatWest Tower in the City of London", followed by a tour of the House of Commons.

While the Commons tour is still very much on the cards, there is obviously considerable doubt about the visit to the tower, which was devastated by the weekend's IRA bomb and will take many months to repair.

The National Westminster Bank, however, is gnitting its teeth in the face of adversity, and is looking for an alternative arrangement. "We will do everything we can to fulfil our side of the bargain," says a spokesman.

Just the ticket

IT IS reassuring to discover that traffic wardens kept their cool on Saturday despite the mayhem caused in the City by the IRA's bomb.

Unable to find a parking

Bouquets for Betty

Betty

The heady scent of celebration was in the air at the Commons yesterday, as fragrant bouquets flooded Betty Boothroyd's office to mark her first anniversary as Speaker. The party began the night before when the Speaker (right) was guest of honour at an exhibition to mark the 75th anniversary of the suffragette movement.

Appropriately, the event had been organised by the 300 Group, which is still fighting for the day when there will be 300 women MPs in the Commons. Madam Speaker had only encouragement for the girls at the event — although, with a mere 59 women MPs, the group is still far short of its target. "If say: 'Well girls you haven't done too badly, but you've still a long way to go.' The Speaker said that it had been a great year. "I have enjoyed every minute of it. Don't I look as if I have?" The consensus was unquestionably.

place for a mid-morning wedding, Canon John Oates, the rector of St Bride's church in Fleet Street, parked in a side street not far from the scene of the blast.

When he returned he discovered a parking ticket timed for 12.27, two hours after the



bomb. But far from venting any unchristian anger, Oates was in a forgiving mood and even saw the funny side of it. "Some things never change. It was a heartwarming sign that the parking police had their priorities right," he said.



ON THE RECORD

The Maastricht story adds another disgraceful chapter

Policicians as seasoned as Douglas Hurd are not expected to contradict themselves in public. With his comments on the potential consequences of a second Danish rejection of the Maastricht treaty in next month's referendum, the foreign secretary has not only broken that rule, but has done so in Denmark itself, in the middle of its referendum campaign, and on an issue — British policy were the Danes to reject Maastricht — on which both he and the prime minister have given what amount to pledges of honour.

Mr Hurd said that a "no" vote on May 18 would precipitate "a crisis involving Denmark's position in the Community", a statement throwing doubt on British support for its continued membership. He conceded that the Maastricht treaty "as such could not proceed"; but he refused to confirm that Britain would decline to sign a son-of-Maastricht treaty, without Denmark. That, said Mr Hurd, would be "obviously untrue". Yet only last December, he said that negotiating such a treaty was "not a political reality". The reality to emerge from Maastricht on Sunday was that Mr Hurd's respect for his own unequivocal pledges has taken second place to his desire to weaken the "no" campaign in Denmark. A central plank of that campaign has been that the Danish government's fears of isolation are exaggerated, since the British government has repeatedly said that it would stand by the Danish decision, yes or nay.

Last June, in the troubled wake of the first Danish referendum on Maastricht, John Major and Douglas Hurd stood out firmly against bullying or coercing the Danes into accepting a treaty about which they had reservations. On June 8, in honourable contrast to the threats emanating from Bonn and Paris, about going ahead without Denmark and forcing it to sign or quit the European Community, Mr Hurd eloquently defended in Parliament the rights of small countries in "a Community of democracies". In the Europe of the future, he said later that

month, "Denmark can neither be coerced nor excluded". Both men have since buttressed that commitment with two specific undertakings: that Britain would not "countenance" any attempt to ease Denmark out of the EC, and that in the event of a second "no" vote, it would not accept a treaty between the other 11 without Denmark.

That, Mr Major said on September 24, "cannot happen and it will not happen". In the paving debate in the House of Commons last November, Mr Major won his tiny majority by saying that Britain would wait for the second Danish referendum before ratifying Maastricht.

These undertakings applied not only to the Maastricht treaty, but to any "son of Maastricht". Mr Hurd made this plain to BBC television's *On the Record* on December 13, at the close of the Edinburgh summit. Again in response to German and French warnings, he said that if Denmark voted no, other EC states might "go into a corner and negotiate a new treaty of a smaller number", but plans for "a new treaty of whatever-it-might-be without Denmark" would "not include us".

Yesterday in Stockholm, Mr Hurd urbanely insisted that he had merely "declined to rule out or rule in any later developments" should the Danes, unexpectedly, vote no. He had gone no further than "a statement of fact". The point he ignored was that Britain had ruled out certain developments, and no longer apparently does. Facts, said the philosopher Strawson, are the shadows that statements cast on things. Mr Hurd has thrown a shadow over the Danish referendum which he shows no sign of regretting. He has also thrown a shadow over his and John Major's most consistent defence of their determination to ratify Maastricht, which is that Britain's word is its bond. Such cynical arm-twisting, such promises forgot, have become second nature to the government in the debates over Maastricht. As a form of intervention in another nation's referendum, they are little short of a disgrace.

RIGHT TO KNOW

Hospital league tables will benefit patients and doctors

Like the bond between confessor and penitent, the relationship between doctor and patient is a sacred one. This is one reason why the prospective publication of hospital league tables is unsettling many doctors, nurses and health service managers, who fear that the drive for openness and accountability in the public sector will breach the Hippocratic seal and make medical practice impossible. Even more than teachers, doctors feel that comparative scrutiny will encourage scapegoating. In the interests of a better health service, it is important that their fears are assuaged.

The purpose of the new performance indicators should not be to single out individual doctors for chastisement or reward, but to identify the kinds of procedure and management structures that improve health care. The way a hospital runs its accounts, patient records or reception desk may be as important as the kind of consultants it attracts. Yesterday *The Times* published a selection of these statistics — some of which will not be generally published when the league tables are launched next year. They should be the basis of an honest debate on the form which public sector information ought to take in future.

At present, the nation's 2,500 hospitals publish little more than waiting lists and numbers of patient treatments. From 1994, patients, fundholders and policy-makers will have access to details of average waiting times for routine surgery, out-patient and emergency services, ambulance response times and the proportions of operations which are cancelled. Clinical indicators including re-admission rates will be added the following year. Eventually, computerisation will create a detailed map of the nation's healthcare.

Behind the tattered curtain of this government's economic and European policies, a genuine revolution in public sector practice is being attempted, much of it under the

much-derided banner of the citizen's charter. Crime and police statistics are to be sharply improved. Last year's school examination league tables infuriated the education establishment but offered parents more information about the nation's schools than ever before. They will soon be a routine part of the educational calendar, provided the law is amended to ensure that teachers cannot wreck them.

Hospital league tables, likewise, are the necessary complement to the internal market in health which separates service providers from purchasers and aspires to give patients the rights of the consumer. A flow of accurate information about hospitals should help individuals make sensible decisions in the marketplace; it should also enable health managers to identify and duplicate good practice. The embarrassing of poor performers will not be enough; the aim must be to raise standards generally.

Because the veil of secrecy is rarely lifted at a stroke, the first round of statistics will be imperfect and incomplete. Hospitals are already complaining of inaccuracies which should give district auditors responsible for data collection cause for concern. Measuring response times in casualty departments accurately (and honestly) will be far more difficult than reporting numbers of deaths.

Individual figures, furthermore, will always tell an incomplete story. High death rates in a particular area, for instance, may reflect a series of horrific motorway accidents or the absence of hospice facilities as much as poor medical practice. But the way to correct such deficiencies is to publish more information rather than less. The number of indicators must increase, as must the sophistication of presentation. Policicians, officials and media must play their part in providing the explanatory footnotes to the bare statistics. Like the hospitals themselves, the league tables that measure them must remain under healthy scrutiny.

FAREWELL TO GREYFRIARS

More choice and less exile are good for most schoolchildren

The peculiar English institution of boarding school continues its gradual decline. In its annual report yesterday, the Independent Schools Information Service confirmed that the trend away from boarding, apparent for the past decade, continues and accelerates.

In spite of recent hard times for fee-paying parents, the number of pupils at independent schools has gone down only slightly in the past year. There are more children being privately educated today than during the depths of the 1983 recession. Day pupils, who make up four-fifths of children in independent schools, fell in numbers by only 0.2 per cent last year. Parents have made substantial sacrifices to pay for private education for their children. In London one child in six is now sent, by hook or by crook, to an independent secondary school, to escape from the supposed and sometimes real horrors of the state system.

But the number of boys boarding full-time fell more steeply last year than before, by 6.7 per cent, and the number of girls boarding by 5.4 per cent. Although boarding has become as necessary for the sons and daughters of the new age of broken and one-

parent families as it was for the children of expatriate servants of the Empire a century ago, the notion that it is natural to send a child away, from an early age, to the care and education of strangers (which visitors to England have found strange since the Middle Ages) is fading.

The fall was particularly steep for the lower ages. Preparatory schools have made great efforts to soften their famous rigours and lose their whiff of recycled cold cabbage and Dotheboys Hall. But British parents are no longer so hide-bound about sending little Alexander and Amanda away at the age of seven to start their cursus honorum towards middle-class respectability.

They may be partly influenced by cost. Fees can now add up to £200,000 for a child from the ages of seven to 18. Modern parents have also become more tender with their young and less certain of the eternal verities of cold baths, Christianity and cricket instilled by Dr Arnold, Miss Beale and Miss Buss. What they want now is not an old school tie, but guarantee of a university place — which not even the best schools can deliver as reliably as required.

City safety after the IRA bomb

From Mr N. M. Peratios

Sir, The weekend's horrific bombing of the City of London by the IRA has further undermined the capital's position as a leading world financial centre. While I am certain that the government will take every possible step to avoid a recurrence, the very nature of the City, which is a sprawling financial, residential, commercial and retail district, located at the centre of the capital, renders it vulnerable and almost impossible to protect against determined terrorists.

Enter the Docklands. Having worked here since 1986, and suffered the derision of City and West End colleagues for having chosen such an "inaccessible" place to work, I can report that I and (I am confident) my 24 colleagues feel very safe. Nothing goes into and out of Canary Wharf or the other adjacent quays, such as this one, without the scrutiny of a vigilant security operation.

Security is an intrinsic part of the design of Docklands. Closed-circuit video cameras network the area, wide open spaces expose and preclude suspicious activity. Indeed, as a result of lessons learnt, dustbins have been removed, and Canary Wharf is kept clean by a team of mobile refuse collectors.

Irrefutable proof that the system works was offered when a van packed with explosives outside Canary Wharf after midnight was spotted immediately, thereby avoiding loss of life and destruction (report, November 16, 1992).

There are many secure buildings in the City. However, the lesson must be that this is not enough. The whole area must be secure — Docklands is such a place. The inconvenience of travelling an extra 15 minutes on a temporarily undeveloped road system is a small price to pay for stability, safety and peace of mind — the prerequisites for a world financial centre.

Yours faithfully,
N. M. PERATIOS
(Director,
Pegasus Ocean Services Ltd,
2 Heron Quay, E14,
April 26.

From Mr David Lewis

Sir, I write this letter leaning on the window ledge of my former office in Bishops House, opposite the Hong-kong & Shanghai Bank building in Bishopsgate. There are no walls, no doors, no ceilings, and no glass in the windows.

I have lost 24 years of accumulated papers, precedents and knowhow, although some of them should be recoverable from our sources eventually and our computers and database are operative.

Before I start feeling too sorry for myself, however, I remind myself that 50 years ago my father and uncle were guests of the Japanese in Changi jail and their sole asset in the world was one loincloth; my other uncle was in an even worse state on the Burma-Siam railway. Before internment they had all been fighting for freedom and the rule of law.

Fifty years on, the rule of law and our basic freedoms remain paramount. Despite having been bombed twice in 12 months, my firm will survive and prosper. Next year is our 200th anniversary.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID LEWIS,
Norton Rose (solicitors),
Bishopsgate House, Bishopsgate, EC2,
April 27.

From Mr P. H. Boardman

Sir, It is clear that we must now radically rethink our whole approach to combating terrorism in central London. Since bombs on the scale of last Saturday's can only be delivered by car or lorry, we now have every incentive to provide pedestrian routes throughout the City and the West End.

The minimum would be to link all the major railway stations and parks. This would give people greater confidence and security when moving about the City and also facilitate access for emergency services.

Yours faithfully,
P. H. BOARDMAN,
161 Arlington Road, NW1,
April 24.

Overworked GPs

From Dr Andrew Orr and others

Sir, James Le Fanu (article, *Body and Mind*, April 20) has drawn attention to the fact that GPs are "unhappy with their lot". Ours is a fairly typical semi-rural market town four-doctor practice. This year each partner can expect to be disturbed at night, between 10pm and 8am, on around 145 occasions.

These comprise 80 visits to patients, 50 items dealt with by telephone, and a further 15 visits to our local cottage hospital, where we cover geriatric and casualty services. During the other hours on call when the surgery is closed, there will be around 250 home visits and 200 telephone consultations for each of us.

These rates have more than doubled in the last decade, with the greatest increases since the onset of the government's health reforms which have raised the expectations of our patients.

In a practice such as ours, where we have no recourse to deputising services for out-of-hours cover, each

Conflict and dialogue in Bosnia

From Professor Adrian Hastings

Sir, Miro Lasovic, the president of the Bosnian parliament, is expected in London this week. If he can get out of Sarajevo, for many people it may come as a surprise that Mr Lasovic is a Bosnian Serb. He is, of course, only one of many Serbs who have refused to support Radovan Karadzic throughout the war and preferred to endure a year of bombardment in the cellars of Sarajevo. Among them are Miodrag Simovic, the deputy prime minister, Branko Nikolic, the minister of justice, Nikola Kovac, the minister of education, and Branko Bilic, the minister of finance.

The Croats in the government are as numerous, including Mile Akmeđic, the prime minister, and Bozo Raic, the minister of defence.

The presence of all these people in the Bosnian government gives the lie most effectively to the underlying concept which Western governments and media continue to work from in their efforts to understand and respond to the Bosnian crisis. With such a pluralist government it cannot conceivably be a "tribal" conflict.

As such it is not a war between three population groups within Bosnia. It is, on the contrary, a conflict between the core of the state and its legitimate government upon the one hand and nationalist factions, armed from outside the country, within each of the two minority groups upon the other.

Over half the total population of Bosnia are now refugees. Karadzic and Boban have won over more territory simply because their forces are heavily armed from Serbia and Croatia while the forces of the legitimate government remain almost unarmed on account of the world's arms embargo.

Reminding themselves of Mr Lasovic, could the media in future at

least cease speaking about arming or not arming "the Bosnian Muslims" and speak instead about whether to arm the forces of a legitimate government endeavouring to defend the integrity of its country against groups not comparable to the IRA? Even a change in phraseology would constitute an advance in understanding.

Yours,
ADRIAN HASTINGS,
The University of Leeds,
Leeds, West Yorkshire LS2 9JT,
April 25.

From Sir Michael Marshall,
MP for Arundel (Conservative)

Sir, The implication in Manthorpe's report, "Easy scoring on a hopeless wicket" (April 20), on the suggestion which I put to the foreign secretary regarding the urgent despatch of a parliamentary delegation to the former Yugoslavia, is misleading. The suggestion was not simply a British initiative but in response to the formal declaration made on April 17 at the end of the Inter-Parliamentary Union's 89th conference, in New Delhi, by almost 500 parliamentarians from 106 countries for the involvement of a broad-based international mission.

It is precisely because the former Yugoslavia is still a member of the IPU and no longer has access to the General Assembly of the United Nations that an opportunity of face-to-face dialogue exists through parliamentary diplomacy. An IPU mission would bring together a wide-ranging representation from all parts of the world of parliamentarians concerned with human rights.

Yours etc,
MICHAEL MARSHALL (President,
Inter-Parliamentary Council),
House of Commons,
April 25.

Levin on the Muslims

From Mr H. St. J. B. Armitage

Sir, For Bernard Levin to suggest (April 27) that Ghazi Algosabi, the Saudi Arabian ambassador in London, is "a man of such manifestly low quality" is as ridiculous as it is insulting rubbish. His description of the ambassador's letter to *The Times* as "impudent and offensive" aptly applies to his attack on that diplomat and the tone of much of his article.

Mr Levin obviously resents the ambassador's suggestion that anybody's conscience should be troubled by the plight of the Palestinians, preferring to point to other examples of man's inhumanity to man.

Mr Levin parades his views on the tyrannies he perceives by going into raptures. Drawing on his words, "I would esteem it a boon" — as would many of your readers — if you would deny him your columns, at least until he raises his argument above personal diatribe, direct and implied, against envoys whom he admits to despising.

Yours faithfully,
H. ST. J. B. ARMITAGE,
The Old Vicarage, East Horwington,
Wells, Somerset,
April 27.

Opera finances

From Mr John McMurray

Sir, Rodney Milnes, in his review of City of Birmingham Touring Opera's production of *Les Boréades* (April 23), has slightly misinterpreted one point with regard to the company's finances. The loss of four planned performances in Britain (and indeed a further two on the Continent) was caused in each case by local funding difficulties affecting local promoters directly.

CBTO has been able to achieve so much in its six-year history in large part because of the deeply committed support given by both Birmingham City Council and Arts Council Touring. That support has been continuous and there is no reason to believe that either body intends to depart from it.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN McMURRAY
(Administrator),
City of Birmingham Touring Opera,
205 The Argent Centre,
60 Frederick Street, Birmingham 1,
April 23.

partner works in the surgery and is on call for well over 80 hours a week. We look with envy at our younger hospital colleagues who have now achieved, in theory at least, a working week below this level.

With the additional tasks involved in implementing the health reforms, GPs are tired. They worry about the efficacy and safety of the medical care they can provide, given these circumstances. They are asking government for help in alleviating this situation.

Yours faithfully,
ANDREW ORR,
ALAN BEGG,
MARGARET COWAN,
JOHN M. GRIFFITH,
Townhead Surgery,
Murray Lane,
Montross, Tayside,
April 22.

Letters to the editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 071-782 5046.

News from elsewhere

From Mr James Lewis

Sir, Walter Ellis ("The truth north of Watford", *Media*, April 21), was, in my view, not far short of the mark in his negative remarks about Liverpool in the wake of the Jamie Bulger tragedy. But the disappearance of regional editorial offices and, consequently, of regional editorial judgment, has been more damaging to balanced national news coverage than Walter Ellis seems to realise. London news desks often seem to treat the regions rather as Britain used to treat the colonies, ignoring them unless they make trouble.

For most of the time, London-based "firemen" do remarkably well, given the difficulties and time constraints of the job. But they should not be surprised at the touchiness of regional readers, like the normally tough and good-humoured Scousers, who feel that only their "bad" news now excites the interest of what used to be Fleet Street.

Yours etc,
JAMES LEWIS,
Broad Court, Beechfield Road,
Alderley Edge, Cheshire.

Home economics

From Mrs Janet Cockerill

Sir, Home economics skills (letters, April 16, 26) were first devalued in the 1970s when they were identified as being preparation for monotonous, unrewarding and unpaid labour carried out by an exclusively female group known as housewives.

To overcome this view, home economists extended their brief to include child care, aspects of design and technology, and other areas that marginalised the main purpose of the subject — to equip boys and girls for adult life with knowledge of nutrition and cooking, consumer skills and practical problem-solving. Now, evidence of young people in debt, homelessness and the emergence of malnutrition and poverty suggest that this education is needed urgently.

Yours faithfully,
JANET COCKERILL,
Diggles Lodge, Dixon Fold,
Barnford, Rochdale, Lancashire.

'Old-school' hacks in the new Russia

From Lord Bethell, MEP for London North West (European Democrat (Conservative))

Sir, The Russian people have shown by their votes in yesterday's referendum (report, April 26) that they have little confidence in the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation, the so-called "Russian parliament".

This is hardly surprising. The present assembly was "elected" under Soviet conditions, which were little better than those that prevailed when the Communist party held a monopoly of power.

It is true that a small number of true democrats were allowed to squeeze in. This has obscured, in many Westerners' eyes, the simple fact that 70 per cent of the members of this "parliament" are communist hacks of the old school. Western television gives air time to those deputies who speak good English, thereby favouring those with Communist party or KGB backgrounds.

British public money has been spent on inviting members of this "parliament" to Britain for meetings and seminars. They have been treated with the respect due to representatives of the Russian people, whereas the basis of their election was quite improper.

I believe that the British Parliament should immediately break off all links with Mr Russian Khasbulatov, the Speaker, and his assembly of dubious characters, resuming these links only when a Russian parliament is elected on a truly democratic basis.

Yours sincerely,
NICHOLAS BETHELL,
73 Sussex Square, W2,
April 26.

Investing in Eritrea

From Mr Louis FitzGibbon

Sir, Apart from raising the time-worn spectre of "Pandora's box" in Africa, your report on Eritrea (April 23) states that diplomats in Addis Ababa are inundated with enquiries about investment possibilities in Eritrea. It is humiliating to realise that in reply the Eritreans would have every right to ask: "Where were you?"

We may have forgotten the scant reports of atrocities perpetrated by the Mengistu regime, but the blinded and the amputees will remember how we did nothing to help the heroic struggle of the Eritreans against a well oiled war machine constantly refreshed by Ethiopian money freed because of gifts by the EC for development under the Lomé agreements.

Despite hard proof, it was the fashion of our government to say that reports of what amounted to genocide were unverifiable and thus slither away from any condemnation other than the faintest murmur at lengthy intervals.

As the napalm and cluster bombs rained down, we looked the other way. Now that there may be financial gain to be had, it seems we are queuing up. It is not a pretty sight.

Yours faithfully,
LOUIS FITZGIBBON,
8 Portland Place,
Brighton, East Sussex,
April 23.

Teaching classics

From Mr Derek Enright,
MP for Hemsley (Labour)

Sir, Two cheers for your leader on the value of the classics ("Classic grounds", April 12). The way in which Latin, in particular, has been squeezed out of the curriculum in state schools damages the complete education not only of the most able pupils but also of those whose grasp of English basics so worries the secretary of state.

Even a basic course in Latin has been shown in the United States to benefit pupils in deprived areas to cope with better English grammar and a more diverse vocabulary, as well as providing tools for better modern language learning. The current naive imposition from above of idiosyncratic syllabuses and tests is precisely what militates against effective cohesion of subjects in the schools.

Your leader of the same date, on how to reform education tests, fails to encapsulate this. I reserve my third cheer for the day when you write one that does.

Yours faithfully,
DEREK ENRIGHT,
House of Commons,
April 12.

God-like proportions

From the Chaplain of Christ's College, Cambridge

Sir, You carried an attractive colour photograph (April 22) of David Williams-Elis's "life-size bronze statues of Greek deities".

Could you also publish details of his research into the anatomical dimensions of the gods? The immortals' ability to metamorphose must surely make their exact measurements difficult to establish.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL LLOYD,
Chaplain,
Christ's College, Cambridge,
April 23.



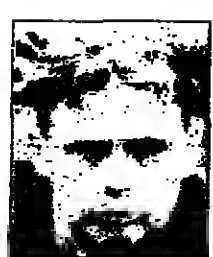
MEDIA 28

Why doesn't the BBC broadcast better news?



ARTS 29-31

New woman at the helm of English National Opera



SPORT 36-40

Gascoigne ready to take on the Dutch

HOMES:
A BRIDGE TO FAR HORIZONS
Page 35

THE TIMES

WEDNESDAY APRIL 28 1993

BUSINESS TODAY

STEPPING UP

Sears

Improved results from its shoe interests helped Sears's latest annual profits rise modestly, though the year's total dividend is cut
Page 22, *Tempus* 25

QUICK STEPS

Norman Lamont has bluntly told the EBRD that it must be vigorous and quick in implementing cost controls
Page 22

OUT OF STEP



Mickey Mouse was not smiling as Euro Disney shares fell 35p, as the group incurred an increased interim loss
Page 23, *Tempus* 25

THE POUND
US \$ 1.5825 (-0.0107)
German mark 2.4996 (+0.0019)
Exchange index 81.4 (-0.1)
Bank of England official close (4pm)

STOCK MARKET
FT-SE 100 2832.7 (+10.4)
Dow Jones 3389.91 (+0.54)
Nikkei Avg 20206.71 (+583.00)

INTEREST RATES
London Bank Base 6%
3-month Interbank 6 1/8%
US Federal Funds 3%
3-month Treas Bills 2.88-2.87%
Long Bond 6.87%

CURRENCIES
New York: London:
£/\$ 1.5777
\$/£ 0.6342
£/DM 1.5007
DM/£ 0.6660
£/Sfr 1.4264
Sfr/£ 0.6999
£/¥ 157.21
¥/£ 0.0064
£/ECU 1.2819
ECU/£ 0.7798
London Forex market close

GOLD
London Fixing (8):
AM 352.80 PM 351.40
Close 350.50-351.00
New York:
Comex 351.45-351.95

RETAIL PRICES
RPI 138.3 March (1.9%)
* Devotee midday trading price

Optimism at 10-year high declares CBI

By PHILIP BASSETT
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

BUSINESS confidence is growing faster than at any time during the last ten years, the Confederation of British Industry said yesterday. But the CBI's optimism was tempered by a much more cautious note on Britain's economic recovery than the government's insistence that the recession is over.

After the increase in output shown on Monday in government figures that led John Major to proclaim that the recession had ended, ministers had been hoping that the CBI quarterly industrial trends survey would back up the prime minister's message.

But while the CBI's survey struck some optimistic notes, it did not allow the confederation to herald the end of recession. Business leaders believe that after the length of the recession in Britain, industrialists are still cautious about being too optimistic too soon. Sir David Lees, chairman of the CBI's economic affairs committee, said business was "quite properly cautious about the start of recovery". He added: "We are beginning to move out of the recession, with exports leading the way. Manufacturers expect continued growth over the next four months. However, with many of our principal export markets in Europe now moving into recession themselves, progress could be slow."

The Treasury noted that the principal findings of the survey largely supported the range of improved economic indicators, and supported the broad lines of the government's economic analysis.

The CBI's survey, of 1,300

■ Despite caution on the end of the recession, the latest CBI industrial trends survey shows that business confidence is showing its sharpest rise for a decade

companies, is the only one of the large-scale industrial surveys to have been carried out fully since the Budget. It found improvements in business confidence, domestic and export orders and output. However, home orders and output remain broadly flat, and though business expects to cut jobs over the next four months, the reduction will be the slowest for three years.

Among the main findings of the April trends survey was that while the volume of new orders improved in April, the number of companies recording an increase in orders against those registering a fall registered a zero balance. But a balance of 20 per cent of companies expect orders to rise over the next four months, the highest forward figure since January 1989.

Export orders rose for the first time since 1990 as the volume of orders increased

from a negative balance of -11 per cent in January to a positive balance of 10 per cent in April.

The survey found that over the past four months, output was also roughly flat, a balance of -1 per cent, after market falls in the 12 preceding quarterly surveys. Again, companies expect a sharp rise in output. The CBI said its output expectation figures pointed to a 0.8 per cent rise in manufacturing output over the second quarter of this year.

Business optimism improved for the second consecutive CBI survey. The rise from a balance of 11 per cent in January to 31 per cent in April is the sharpest increase in confidence since April 1983, though the CBI acknowledged that a proportion of this increase could be due to seasonal factors, since CBI surveys tend to show a growth in confidence in spring.

The investment outlook in the survey was poor, with a balance of -8 per cent of companies expecting to cut spending on plant and machinery over the year ahead. Though capacity utilisation has improved, industrialists said that business still found investment in further capacity unnecessary at this time.

Employment fell less sharply in the first four months of 1993, though CBI figures showed a fall in manufacturing employment of 49,000 in the first quarter. That would fall by a further 30,000 over the next three months.



Sir David: properly cautious

In the market for market-maker

By MELINDA WITTSTOCK

WANTED: An energetic, youthful and "emotionally stable" chief executive equipped with "a wide range of leadership, management and interpersonal skills to overcome what has clearly been a difficult time for the London Stock Exchange".

Still struggling to restore its credibility since the demise last month of Taurus, the paperless trading project, the Exchange has hired Heidrick & Struggles, the City headhunters, to find a replacement for Peter Rawlinson.

But the headhunters face an uphill battle to find a suitable

candidate. Few in the City expect it will find the right person until the future of Andrew Hugh Smith, its chairman, becomes clear.

Most stockbroking firms now expect he will resign soon after the new chief executive is found.

A confidential job description obtained by *The Times* says the new chief must "share responsibility for the future strategic direction of the Stock Exchange with the chairman".

The nine-page document says the lucky man or woman must have been a chief executive or general manager of a financial services institution who has demonstrated "overall success" and a "clear impact".

Ideally aged between 40 and 55, the new chief must also be "a team player who enjoys being a leader".

Some names put forward by senior City figures are impressive. David Walker, deputy chairman at Lloyds Bank; Michael Kerr-Dineen, managing director of Credit Lyonnais; Laing; Bob Benton, James Capel's new chief executive; and Peter Bennett, who set up SEAG and Talisman.



Micro vision: Bill Gates, 37, founder of Microsoft, may have been the youngest at the Institute of Directors annual convention — and is certainly the highest paid. But the picture he painted of the future saw a world where computers would change from being a tool of the company to a tool of the individual (*Speeches*, page 22)

Record losses for Tarmac

By GEORGE SIVELL
CITY EDITOR

TARMAC, the construction and building products group, said that "at last there are some signs of recovery in the British economy" and confirmed record losses for any company in the sector.

During 1992, Tarmac lost an overall £14.4 million after setting aside a massive £372 million to cover a retreat from commercial property, the fall in the value of housing land, losses on contracts, losses on businesses sold and the costs of a reorganisation. Before tax, Tarmac lost £350 million, against a profit of £21 million.

However, the company is maintaining the dividend at 5.5p and the shares rose 8p to 141p. Neville Simms, the chief executive, said: "While trading in the first half of 1993 continues to be difficult there are, at last, some signs of recovery in the British economy and the group's particular markets."

Quarry products fell from operating profits of £42.8 million to £29.6 million in 1992, housing fell from £56.4 million to £38.6 million, construction fell from £39.7 million to £22.7 million, building materials went into a £2.9 million loss, industrial products fell from £12.5 million to £4.8 million and Tarmac America improved from losses of \$11.8 million to \$6 million.

Tempus, page 25
Tarmac's black hole, page 25

Branson challenges BA chiefs

By DEREK HARRIS

SIR Colin Marshall and Robert Ayling, the British Airways chiefs, should either sue or "consider their positions" after Granada's *World in Action* TV programme allegations about aspects of the BA dirty tricks campaign against Richard Branson's Virgin group.

This reaction came yesterday from Mr Branson as he broke off from addressing the Institute of Directors' annual convention at London's Albert Hall. Sir Colin and Mr Ayling were alleged by *World in Action* to be involved in authorising key aspects of the dirty tricks campaign.

Mr Branson, who is planning further consequential writs within two weeks in either the American or British

courts, said he was surprised that there had been no writs issued against Granada already by the BA camp.

Mr Branson said: "Either British Airways should issue writs against *World in Action* on the grounds it had the facts wrong or the board should question senior directors of BA and consider their positions." Equally, he added, Sir Colin and Mr Ayling should either test the accuracy of the programme's allegations in court or "consider their positions".

Asked if he thought the programme had been accurate, Mr Branson said: "From everything I know, I could not in any way question anything that was said." If the programme was right, the dirty

tricks campaign had been a "catalogue of disasters from beginning to end", Mr Branson said.

British Airways was suffering from the aftermath of the dirty tricks campaign, Mr Branson said. Virgin had seen an 18 per cent rise in passenger load factors which, he believed, had come mainly from regular BA passengers deciding to switch.

BA said last night: "We have no comment to make on the programme and, if sued, we will deal with the matter in court." It is believed that BA will ignore the *World in Action* programme.

Speeches, page 22
City Diary, page 25

Enjoy directors day, it does you good

Yesterday was directors day, when the members of the Institute of Directors gather together at a single national event to hear distinguished speakers and send their message to the world. Vindictive as most delegates are to their own respective businesses, I doubt if much harm was done by the bosses' day out, especially if they enjoyed it. If only the institute agreed.

Only last month Peter Morgan, its lively director general was busy lobbying the government against national days and the institute will already have drawn satisfaction that this weekend's May bank holiday will be among the last. According to the IoD, traditional bank holidays are out of date, and should be abolished as a restraint of trade. Instead, individual companies would replace the eight bank holidays other than Christmas day and Boxing day with holidays of their own to suit production schedules. Sounds like a great boost to family life.

The government does not go so far. The May holiday was a particular *bête noire* because it was seen as an echo of the Communist May Day, which has since become obsolete, rather than Britain's traditional may-

poles and morris dancing, which were thought to be obsolete but have been magically revived since the bank holiday started in the seventies. Scared of being tagged a killjoy, the government, in the person of Gillian Shephard, wants a new bank holiday in the dreary days of autumn which may or may not be called Trafalgar day, but whose main supposed virtue is that there are not many holidays then. It is hard to imagine anything more dull-minded or so lacking in grasp of the values of people and community and the value that has to an advanced mature economy.

The institute has a point, even though its conclusion is silly. Apart from the ghastly August bank holiday, famous for its traffic jams, most of the holidays have been divorced from their original meaning by being moved to the nearest convenient Monday, partly to avoid disrupting business. Once they have become simply days off, an occasional long weekend, they serve little purpose and might just as well be handed over to



the idea that low wages are essential to people's long-term prosperity. Germany, especially in the South, has far more bank holidays than Britain. Even in Japan, where salarymen are notorious for not taking their personal holidays, there are almost 20 annual national holidays when people celebrate together, whether by picnicking among the cherry blossom, organising cultural events or gathering in families.

Japan's economy seems to survive such frivolous excesses. Rather, meaningful national days make people more confident and relaxed, building that famous Japanese teamwork in industry. The German experience also shows that holidays, high wages and short hours need not be ruinous. It is the quality of work that counts. Germans are forever nervous that they have taken things too far

and that factories will desert to places where people work longer, earn less and generally fulfil the accountant's dream of a labour force.

Yet the Rhineland continues to forge ahead of Britain. In Singapore, where holidays help knit together a country with few national traditions, Lee Kuan Yew tried to make the island the Switzerland of Asia by discouraging investment in cheap labour industries. He pushed artificially and too fast, but the idea was right.

Let us hope the dull policymakers of Britain think again. If we want an autumn holiday, it could be on All Saints day or Armistice day, both much favoured on the continent, or the more traditional Michaelmas or Martinmas. There are rosy things we could celebrate, from peace to the harvest. Yet the government actually wants its new holiday to be meaningless. If Trafalgar day were to have any meaning, it would merely be to cock a snook at the French, as some pathetic kind of compensation for the humiliations heaped on us from Brussels. So it will not. We need to celebrate and build national confidence. If nothing better, we might celebrate business with a national enterprise day.

Business As Usual

Today we have returned to our offices at the corner of Bishopsgate and Camomile Street.

We apologise for any disruption to our services following the weekend's events in the City of London.

Many thanks to all our friends throughout the City and elsewhere for their generosity in providing space and other support.

Norton Rose

Norton Rose
Rampside House, PO Box 570
Camomile Street, London EC3A 7AN
Telephone: 071 263 2434



LONDON • HONG KONG • BRUSSELS • PARIS • SINGAPORE • BAHRAIN • PIRAEUS • MOSCOW

Industry attacks poor judgment of government

THE government's economic policies, strategy, organisation and vision were sharply criticised yesterday by Sir Alistair Grant, chairman and chief executive of Argyl Group.

Sir Alistair's speech to the annual convention of the Institute of Directors, at the Albert Hall in London, delivered a warning from business to the government that despite more positive signs in the economy it had to improve massively its overall performance. His message was made all the more poignant by his declaration that he was a "wholehearted and convinced Tory" who insisted that one of his conditions for recovery was that Britain should have a Conservative government.

He maintained that the Conservatives had made "fundamental errors of judgment" in their recent conduct of the economy, putting too strong a foot on the economic accelerator in the late 1980s and too savage a foot on the brakes in the early 1990s.

Sir Alistair said business was asking for "no more than the appropriate level of competence in government" when it sought from the prime minister that he should create a vision of Britain in the 21st century, assemble a government team competent to do its job, provide stable conditions to allow business to operate and "articulate the themes of his basic policies in language that sufficiently inspires us to go forward with him towards long-term prosperity."

Britain relied on leadership and vision from the top he said, adding: "It is late, but not too late, for John Major to begin to make the right

moves." The government needed to seek advice, possibly from business, on how to direct and manage its responsibilities, replacing the 19th-century structures of government, bringing in people trained and able to tackle the problems of the next century.

Sir Alistair said that, since the mid-1980s, the government had "used the slogans of free enterprise and the free market as an excuse for the government's failure to think through fundamental questions of economic or industrial policy," as shown by the middle of the Channel tunnel and over coal.

If Britain adopted "an evangelistic, even messianic commitment to certain 'free-market' dogmas, we put our

ECONOMY

own industries at a disadvantage" to European rivals, who were less dogmatic and more realistic, Sir Alistair said. He attacked the "long period of seemingly pointless attrition" of recent economic policy, suggesting that senior ministers should have "retired" when Britain came out of the exchange-rate mechanism last September.

Instead, ministers were now suggesting that the new sterling exchange rate and lower interest rates were somehow the result of policy. Even now, he said, as the economy hesitantly recovered, "it is implied we should be grateful."

His message was reinforced by Peter Morgan, the IoD's director-general, who told the 3,000 delegates at the conven-

tion that a new vision of a successful Britain was needed and politicians must pursue policies that would make that a reality.

The United Kingdom has fallen to the bottom of the third division among the world's leading economies, Mr Morgan said, ranking 18th in a league table of 24 nations in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

But, he added, the British were "talented, creative, civilised, smart. For too long, we have been victims of our past. Now we need the vision to be masters of our future. And our politicians must share that vision." With vision, Britain could make a comeback, he predicted, adding: "We must aim to knock Italy out of the second division and then compete with France for promotion to the first."

Renewing his call for the privatisation of the Bank of England, Mr Morgan said proper control of inflation was imperative if Britain were to regain its economic place in the world.

Opening the convention, Lord Young of Graffham, the former trade secretary and new IoD president, urged British business to be vigilant of its competitiveness during this fragile period in which economic recovery appeared to be under way. "The patient is still in intensive care. No sudden shocks, please, no swings of policy. It is stability we ask for, stability at the present level of inflation, keeping interest rates as low as we can consistent with exchange rate stability," Lord Young urged.



Masters of our own future: Peter Morgan, IoD director-general, called on ministers to share a new vision of Britain

Branson shows way to succeed

RICHARD Branson, the Virgin Group chairman, rounded off the convention with a flamboyant speech giving a guide to becoming a millionaire by, among other avenues, keeping to the philosophy that small is beautiful.

On the way he took a few sideways, notably at the lack of competitiveness in the airline industry. Mr Branson, who is locked in legal combat with British Airways over BA's dirty tricks campaign, joked that one way to become a

AIRLINES

millionaire was to start out as a billionaire and then go into the airline business.

He also hit out at some contemporary industrial beliefs, notably the effects of the way the British wallow in tradition. Good as that might be for tourism and airlines, it had no place in industry, Mr Branson said: "The fact that some people have supplied a

particular line of products for years is not an indication of excellence. It is much more likely an indication of neglect." Situations like that were a challenge: the opportunity for doing something new. That was why Virgin Group, for example, experimented endlessly with new products, new methods, new companies and new marketing, he said.

"We need to start putting more effort into building new business enterprises than into propping up and protecting

crumbling, obsolete companies." He was caustic about government declarations on determination to improve airline competition. He said: "The policy is fine in theory, but in practice the record has been disastrous. To lose Laker Airways alone may have been a misfortune, but to lose Laker and British Caledonian and Air Europe and British Island Airways and Dan-Air suggests that somebody is being very careless indeed."

The government had taken some actions to improve competition, he admitted, and it had claimed to have liberalised air services within the EC. Mr Branson said: "Unfortunately you cannot forever run an industry to be a little bit competitive any more than you can be a little bit pregnant. It is all or nothing. No one can sit back on their pro-competitive laurels until all the barriers to competition have been removed." He retained much of his passion for the Branson version of the small is beautiful philosophy. He highlighted Virgin Records, which instead of being a single international operation had been developed as a series of self-contained operations run by their own management and staff, numbering currently more than 50 organisations.

Convention reports by Philip Bassett, Ross Tieman and Derek Harris

Diversity destroys myth of the mighty media mogul

MEDIA barons such as Rupert Murdoch, chairman of The News Corporation, will be "powerless" in the next century because of the spread of information and the pre-eminence of the consumer, Mr Murdoch's principal UK manager said yesterday.

In a speech to the IoD conference that was notably upbeat about the UK media industry, Andrew Knight, executive chairman of News International, publisher of The Times, said that Britain was "brilliantly" placed to be at the forefront of the new information revolution that would "sweep away most of the legal and institutional

arrangements that have been built up over many years."

Speaking in place of Mr Murdoch, who had been forced to pull out of the conference because of inter-national commitments, Mr Knight painted a positive picture of the strength and importance of the expanding UK media industry, which offered increasing and near-unlimited choice.

The expansion of choice would put the customer in the driving seat, and Mr Knight said to media customers: "When choice and medium are multiplying at such an impossible pace, nobody can or could dominate what you

PRESS AND TELEVISION

read or see." He insisted people should "get over our hang-ups about who owns what." The future media landscape meant that the perception — "and it is only a perception, not a fact" — of the mighty media mogul would belong to the past.

While large companies would inevitably be in the vanguard of change, Mr Knight said that the days of a newspaper proprietor attempting to run the country through the pages of a newspaper were long gone, and would never return. He said:

"Modern life is too anarchic, rich, unconfined and wild for a Beaverbrook, a Northcliffe or a Murdoch to dominate anything. The powerlessness of the media baron will be a 'given' in the 21st century; it will be a product of his own commercial success."

News International, he said, had pioneered media choice in Britain, and in doing so, had "bred and multiplied our own competition." He paid tribute to the government's "visionary" deregulation policies, including the 1990 Broadcasting Act,

but criticised politicians who "from the comfort of their green leathered benches" in the Commons lashed for industry to be competitive and creative, to provide investment and jobs and to embrace technology and change — and then refused to recognise that the £35 billion UK media industry was doing just that.

Praising a range of the UK media, including non-UK products such as Reuters, the BBC and the Financial Times, as well as NI publications, such as The Sun and The Sunday Times, Mr Knight said that nobody would be the sole provider of media in the future, because

the "thinking, articulate, emancipated viewer is the only king in his or her sovereign, individualist millions."

Britain was brilliantly poised to take advantage of the information revolution because of the importance of the English language to a wide range of world developments and because of its enterprise and innovation. But he said that spirit had been lost since the early 1980s, and now needed to be recaptured by throwing off the "pervasive mood" of defeatism and accepting "with fire in our hearts" the opportunities ahead.

Lamont urges cost control at the EBRD

BY COLIN NARBROUGH

NORMAN Lamont, the Chancellor and the British governor of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, has told the bank it must implement promised cost control measures quickly and vigorously.

Mr Lamont, speaking on the closing day of the bank's annual meeting in Westminster, repeated John Major's criticism of Jacques Attali, the EBRD president and his directors, calling for the bank to use taxpayers' money as cost effectively as possible.

The bank has come under attack from some delegates for its lack of cost control, but Mr Lamont said he welcomed the changes the EBRD board had agreed to improve the running of the bank. "These changes have to be implemented quickly," he said.

Britain, as host country, provided £40 million towards establishing the EBRD offices. Mr Lamont, who is expected to press for greater cost efficiencies at the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund at their Washington meetings this week, said the government was "very pleased" to have the EBRD in London. But he said Britain shared the concerns of other shareholders that an institution designed to promote efficiency and enterprise in eastern and central Europe must be properly managed.

Mr Lamont urged western backers of the EBRD to improve trade relations across Europe, which, he said, would require much greater efforts

than the agreements so far on free trade.

The EBRD should stick to its job and try to show a profit by 1995, Henning Christophersen, vice-president of the European Commission, said. Mr Christophersen, the EC representative on the EBRD governors' committee, delivered a strong warning to M Attali. "If the bank is to carry out its mandate correctly, it will need to inspire confidence in a wider public."

The EBRD, which has been under a barrage of criticism for the past fortnight over its high spending on its London offices and staff, and low level of disbursement in eastern and central Europe, posted a net loss of 6.1 million ecu (£4.7 million). Brussels' concern about the level of disbursement by the two-year-old bank, and by its difficulties in finding suitable private sector projects to invest in, prompted Mr Christophersen's attack.

He underlined that the EC wants the EBRD to stick to its mandate of allowing no more than 40 per cent of its activity to be in the public sector. "We placed the highest importance on the bank's mission to finance private business investment and respect the founding agreement."

Ivan Kocarnik, the Czech finance minister, voiced disappointment over the small contribution the EBRD had made to the Czech economy. While direct investment in the republic last year was \$1.1 billion, he said the EBRD provided only \$50 million.



Hands on: Liam Strong of Sears brought in profits at the top end of expectations

Shoes step up profit at Sears

BY SUSAN GILCHRIST

SEARS, the Selfridges-to-Dolcis retail conglomerate, managed a modest advance in full-year profits, at the top end of expectations, thanks to a turnaround at its British Shoe Corporation subsidiary.

Liam Strong, who was appointed chief executive at the beginning of last year, reported pre-tax profit of £83.5 million for the year ended January 31, up from £81.2 million. Mr Strong said the group had made a "decent start" to his planned three-year recovery programme.

Trading profits from core operations were up 11.8 per cent to £107.2 million as a

result of tighter cost control. Overall, the group made a loss after tax of £48.9 million, after £112 million of extraordinary items relating to the disposal of its menswear and house-building businesses.

The final dividend was cut from 3.83p to 2.5p, as indicated at the interim stage, giving a total of 3.5p for the year against 5.35p. Net debt fell by £59 million to £47 million, reducing gearing to 4.3 per cent.

The dramatic turnaround at British Shoe, which saw trading profits rise 150 per cent to £23.3 million, despite the closure of 172 outlets, was

achieved by "better styling, better sourcing and better running of logistics," said Mr Strong. He believes there is scope for further improvement, given that trading margins are still only 4.3 per cent.

Trading profit at the mail order division fell from £29.9 million to £23.2 million due to a £6.9 million loss from the Meulen Post, the Dutch business acquired just before Mr Strong joined the group. Selfridges, which Mr Strong insisted was not up for sale, posted a 4 per cent increase in profit to £16.9 million.

Times, page 25

Battered NatWest sees an end to recession

BY PATRICIA TEHAN
BANKING CORRESPONDENT

LORD Alexander, chairman of National Westminster Bank, yesterday praised staff, suppliers and friends throughout the business world who have helped the bank to carry out its work as usual.

NatWest Tower, where the bank had been due to hold its annual meeting yesterday, was one of the buildings worst affected by Saturday's IRA bomb attack.

Lord Alexander told shareholders — at the new Chiswell Street Brewery venue — that the help received by NatWest "reflects the determination of the City of London as Europe's most important financial centre to continue to provide the services that are so vital to the economy."

He also told shareholders that the bank has seen signs that the recession is over.

"The early months of this year have seen some continuing and steady improvement," he said. "It is too early to be dogmatic, but our experience so far this year suggests we are over the worst so far as UK bad debts are concerned."

"Our income is growing in some areas, notably in NatWest Markets, but loan demand at present remains subdued. This may well continue for some time and inhibit the scope for income growth. A good deal must clearly depend on the strength of the economic recovery in this country."

Lord Alexander rejected criticism over the high level of remuneration of NatWest directors, and also hinted at the need to introduce charges on personal current accounts.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

DTI aims to ease audit burden on sole traders

MORE than 250,000 sole traders are set to benefit from the Department of Trade and Industry's latest deregulation initiative. In an attempt to alleviate the burden of audit costs on small businesses, the DTI is proposing either to abolish the audit requirement or to replace the audit report with a less costly "compilation" report.

The proposals apply to companies with annual turnovers below the VAT threshold, currently £37,600, and gross assets of less than £100,000. Neil Hamilton, minister for corporate affairs, said the companies currently pay between £500 and £1,000 in audit fees, which is a "big chunk out of profits".

Hope for MCC creditors

MARK Homan of Price Waterhouse, senior joint administrator to Maxwell Communication Corporation, is to apply to the High Court for approval to call a creditors' meeting in London on July 1. The move follows approval by Tina Brozman, the US Bankruptcy Court judge, of the disclosure statement filed in MCC's American Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceedings. Creditors at the meeting will be asked to vote on a scheme of arrangement after receiving full financial details. Claims are therefore on track to be resolved by the last quarter of this year, Mr Homan said.

BaE upbeat on Rover

JOHN Cahill, chairman of British Aerospace, said the company's Rover car division could start making profits in 1993. A combination of favourable exchange rates, cost cuts and product range development "provides a basis for Rover to move through its break-even point in 1993", he told shareholders at the company's annual meeting. Recovery in the British market would help Rover disproportionately, as Britain remains by far the company's most important market, he said. BaE shares jumped 8p before slipping back slightly to end with a 6p gain at 32.2p.

Bryant seeks £18m

BRYANT Group, the Midlands housebuilder, is raising £18 million in a share placing to fund its land acquisition programme. Colin Hope, Bryant's chairman, said there was an encouraging revival in house buying confidence, and net reservations since December 1 were more than 30 per cent ahead of the previous year. The company is issuing 13 million ordinary shares at 137.5p, a 44p discount to the market price. Bryant aims to expand its housebuilding programme from a forecast 2,600 homes for the current financial year to 3,000 in the period ending May 30, 1994.

هكذا من الاجل

مكتبة الامم المتحدة

Technical leaps will transform way of life

IMF seeks action as world growth prospects shrink

By JANET BUSH IN LONDON AND WOLFGANG MÜNCHAU IN WASHINGTON

THE sluggishness of the world economy will dominate the agenda in Washington this week of the Group of Seven industrialised nations and the International Monetary Fund. Their meetings will be held against the background of worsening forecasts for growth this year.

The IMF is predicting world growth of only 2.2 per cent this year and growth of only 1.7 per cent for the seven leading industrialised nations, about half the levels it predicted six months ago. It attributed the worsening of its view to the slowdown in Europe — with the European Community growing by a marginal 0.1 per cent this year — and to the failure by governments — among them Britain's — to tackle rising budget deficits.

In its twice-yearly report on the world economy, the IMF urges Britain to cut its budget deficit, claiming that the recovery depended "critically on the adoption of further measures, in the 1994 budget or

■ As economic leaders meet this week amid concern about flagging growth, Europe is seen as a black spot and Britain is warned on its deficit

even before, to secure a faster reduction of the large budget deficit". It urged higher taxes and cuts in public spending.

Treasury officials are understood to believe that the budget and the current sweeping review of government spending have gone some way to addressing such concerns. They did not believe Britain would come under any overt pressure from its G7 partners to take further action.

The IMF also urged Britain to resist cutting interest rates any further as this would risk a resurgence in inflation, particularly after a substantial decline in the value of sterling.

European monetary officials said that, although the development of the world economy was of great concern, they felt that individual countries had taken useful steps since the last G7 meeting in London in February. However,

er, there remain some worries. The IMF urged Germany to take a lead in a concerted move to "a further, significant and progressive reduction in interest rates".

Germany's Solidarity Pact is noted as a positive contribution, with the aim of reducing the budget deficit. European monetary officials also welcomed Japan's ¥13 trillion stimulus package but questioned how much of this money is actually new rather than repackaged old spending. "Given the Japanese track record, there is a certain scepticism about what these fiscal packages add up to," one official remarked.

There is general satisfaction with the budget cutting package announced by the Clinton administration in America but some concern about whether the package will get through Congress unscathed.

McKechnie bids for Savage

By CARL MORTISHED

MCKECHNIE, the plastic and metal components maker, is looking into the housing market recovery with a £47 million bid for Savage Group, the DIY products group. The offer is backed by the board of Savage. McKechnie also revealed a 2 per cent rise in pre-tax profit to £10.8 million for the half year to end-January.

Vanni Treves, chairman of McKechnie, said Savage's products were an excellent fit with McKechnie's consumer products businesses. "We believe that there will be no earnings dilution in the first full financial year," he said.

Savage investors are being offered four McKechnie shares for every 21 Savage shares, putting a value of 80p on Savage, a rise of 67 per cent over the pre-bid price of 48p. A full cash alternative is being offered at 73.33p. Savage shares rose to 77p.

Savage, quoted on the USM, expanded rapidly in the 1980s on the back of the housing market boom and bought businesses on the Continent. Its profits peaked in 1988-9 at just over £7 million but 1991 brought a loss. A programme of cost-cutting and disposals of European

businesses helped Savage to return to the black in the year to end-June last year, with pre-tax profits of £2.2 million on sales of £70 million.

McKechnie had been tipped for an acquisition in Europe but the company says the time is not right.

Its sales in the interim period were up by £1 million to £140.8 million and profit before interest improved by 7 per cent to £11 million. UK profits declined due to a £300,000 charge for redundancies. Earnings per share rose 4p to 9.5p. The interim dividend stays at 5p.

Monster loss looms for Disney

By SARAH BAGNALL



MICKY Mouse is on the scrounge. The Euro Disneyland theme park near Paris is facing a big loss this year and looks likely to need a further source of finance if the huge development programme is to be completed.

Yesterday's results from the company saw a further plunge into the red, a net loss of £1.1 billion for the six months to end-March, knocking 38p off the shares in London to 895p, well below the level they enjoyed before its highly publicised opening last April.

The company warned shareholders that due to the losses and its high level of fixed costs there would be a "substantial loss" for the full year. There was a net cash outflow of £1.5 billion during the six-month period.

Shareholders face a likely rights issue as the company explores ways of raising new funds to finance capital expenditure, including the Phase 2 development, a film studio theme park.

Nigel Reed, leisure analyst at Paribas Capital Markets, said that the company needs funding of £9 billion-plus for its future developments and more equity capital to reduce its gearing. At the interim stage, Euro Disney had long-term borrowings of £20 billion and gearing of about 350 per cent.

Euro Disney is still going ahead with its plans for its Phase 2 development, expected to cost £8 billion to £9 billion and seen as key to the company's future. Over the next 18 months, the company also needs £1 billion to finance the creation of the smaller attractions, including a new ferris wheel, roller-coaster rides, steam train and another stop on the railway. The existing attractions pulled in 3.3 visitors in the six traditionally slack winter months, compared with 6.8 million in the previous period. Hotel occupancy was 37 per cent.

Attempts to smooth out the seasonality of revenues have been made with a new pricing policy.

Tempus, page 25

Giant cash call: Euro Disneyland shareholders may soon face a rights issue

Leeds dips £5m as debt cover doubles

By LINDSAY COOK MONEY EDITOR

THE first half pre-tax profits of Leeds Permanent Building Society slipped by almost £5 million to £90.2 million after the fifth largest society more than doubled its provisions for bad and doubtful debts.

In the six months ending March 31, the building society set aside £84.1 million compared with £40.8 million for the same period last year. A further £17.6 million of irrecoverable interest was written off.

The provisions for the first half were only £5 million up on the second half of last year, suggesting that losses have stabilised.

The Leeds is the first of the major societies to produce interim figures because its year end is three months earlier than most of its competitors.

While its results will be encouraging, the Leeds has a lower exposure to the South East than many of the other large building societies. Nationwide, the second largest society, with a year end of April 5, is expected to unveil lower profits for the year when it reports in early June.

Operating profits at the Leeds were up 28.3 per cent in the first half to £174.3 million, an all-time record for the society.

"This is a considerable achievement when considered in the context of the depressed housing market and high unemployment," said Malcolm Barr, the society's chairman.

Assets increased by 5.7 per cent to £19.4 billion and the society's total assets ratio rose to 4.73 per cent from 4.67 per cent.

The Leeds lost its chief executive in February when Mike Blackburn was selected by the Halifax Building Society to become its chief executive from August.

Roger Boyes, finance director, is acting chief executive and no permanent appointment is imminent, a spokesman for the Leeds said.

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MONEY MARKETS					
Exchange index compared with 1985 was down at 81.4 (day's range 81.2-81.6).					
STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES					
Mkt Rates for Apr 27	Range	Close	1 month	3 month	
Amsterdam	2.5003-2.8143	2.8015-2.8049	1 st adv	7 th adv	
Brussels	51.20-51.55	51.30-51.31	6-11 ads	21-74s	
Copenhagen	9.5610-9.6570	9.5860-9.6110	31-41 ads	91-114s	
Dublin	10.6110-10.1090	10.1617-10.1188	18-24s	51-76s	
Frankfurt	2.4008-2.5061	2.4100-2.4933	1 st adv	1 st adv	
Geneva	231.10-231.10	231.10-231.58	250-300	658-700	
Lisbon	183.60-185.00	183.72-184.00	136-170s	361-427s	
Madrid	230.60-235.40	230.60-235.40	81-10s	26-90s	
Milano	2.0012-2.0143	2.0074-2.0085	0.25-0.17p	0.43-0.29p	
Montreal	1.5770-1.5900	1.5770-1.5780	0.30-0.38p	1.15-1.13p	
New York	10.5150-10.5950	10.520-10.5650	1 st adv	4 th -6ads	
Oslo	8.3950-8.4640	8.3950-8.4640	1 st adv	4 th -6ads	
Paris	11.6250-11.5060	11.6250-11.4770	1 st adv	8 th -8ads	
Stockholm	174.45-175.31	174.10-175.31	1 st adv	1 st adv	
Vienna	17.50-17.81	17.50-17.55	1 st adv	1 st adv	
Zurich	2.2432-2.2571	2.2432-2.2463	1 st par	1 st par	
Source: Exel		Premium - pr. Discount - ds			

Bahrain dinar	0.592-0.604	Belgium (Comi)	11.07-11.08
Brazil cruzeiro	49.181.3-49.213.1	Canada	24.375-24.380
Cyprus pound	0.736-0.748	Denmark	8.044-8.048
Finland markka	8.419-8.535	France	5.317-5.318
Greece drachma	36.73-36.77	Germany	1.574-1.575
Hong Kong dollar	12.265-12.268	Hong Kong	7.548-7.549
India rupee	40.24-50.20	Ireland	1.549-1.549
Kuwait dirham KD	0.4115-0.415	Italy	1.468-1.470
Malaysia ringgit	4.074-4.079	Japan	141.0-141.0
Mexican peso	4.31-4.9	Malaysia	2.50-2.5-2.5
New Zealand dollar	2.890-2.901	Netherlands	1.789-1.789
Saudi Arabia riyal	5.884-5.905	Norway	0.65-0.65
Singapore dollar	2.559-2.562	Portugal	145.8-145.7
S Africa rand (fin)	7.207-7.279	Singapore	1.613-1.614
S Africa rand (com)	4.977-4.984	Spain	11.6-11.6
U.S. dollar	5.576-5.587	Sweden	7.221-7.235
Barclays Bank GTS - Liquid Bank		Switzerland	1.416-1.417

MONEY RATES (%)					
Base Rates: Clearing Banks & Finance Hse & /					
Discount: Market Lender: Overnight high: 0					
Treasury Bills (Discount): 2 mth 5 1/4% ; 3 mth 5% ; 6 mth 5 1/4% ; 9 mth 5 1/4% ; 12 mth 5 1/4%					
Prime Bank Bills (Discount): 1 mth 5 1/4% ; 2 mth 5 1/4% ; 3 mth 5 1/4% ; 6 mth 5 1/4% ; 12 mth 5 1/4%					
Sterling Money Rates: 1 mth 5 1/4% ; 2 mth 5 1/4% ; 3 mth 5 1/4% ; 6 mth 5 1/4% ; 12 mth 5 1/4%					
Interbank: 1 mth 5 1/4% ; 2 mth 5 1/4% ; 3 mth 5 1/4% ; 6 mth 5 1/4% ; 12 mth 5 1/4%					
Overnight open & close: 1 mth 5 1/4% ; 2 mth 5 1/4% ; 3 mth 5 1/4% ; 6 mth 5 1/4% ; 12 mth 5 1/4%					
Local Authority Depos: 1 mth 5 1/4% ; 2 mth 5 1/4% ; 3 mth 5 1/4% ; 6 mth 5 1/4% ; 12 mth 5 1/4%					
Sterling CDs: 1 mth 5 1/4% ; 2 mth 5 1/4% ; 3 mth 5 1/4% ; 6 mth 5 1/4% ; 12 mth 5 1/4%					
Dollar CDs: 1 mth 5 1/4% ; 2 mth 5 1/4% ; 3 mth 5 1/4% ; 6 mth 5 1/4% ; 12 mth 5 1/4%					
Building Society CDs: 1 mth 5 1/4% ; 2 mth 5 1/4% ; 3 mth 5 1/4% ; 6 mth 5 1/4% ; 12 mth 5 1/4%					

ECB's: Fixed Rate Sterling Export Finance. Make-up date: Mar 31, 1993. Agreed until Feb 26, 1997 to May 26, 1993. Scheme I: 7.36% ; Scheme II & III: 7.25% ; Reference rate Mar 27, 1993 to Mar 31, 1993: Scheme IV & V: 0.028 %.

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)					
Currency	7 day	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	Call
Dollar	3 1/4-2 1/4	3 1/4-2 1/4	3 1/4-2 1/4	3 1/4-2 1/4	3 1/4-2 1/4
Deutschmark	7 1/4-7 1/4	7 1/4-7 1/4	7 1/4-7 1/4	7 1/4-7 1/4	7 1/4-7 1/4
French Franc	9 1/4-9 1/4	9 1/4-9 1/4	9 1/4-9 1/4	9 1/4-9 1/4	9 1/4-9 1/4
Swiss Franc	5 1/4-5 1/4	5 1/4-5 1/4	5 1/4-5 1/4	5 1/4-5 1/4	5 1/4-5 1/4
Yen	3 1/4-3 1/4	3 1/4-3 1/4	3 1/4-3 1/4	3 1/4-3 1/4	3 1/4-3 1/4

GOLD & PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)			
Bullion: Open \$351.80-352.10	Close \$350.50-351.00	High \$353.00-355.40	
Low \$350.25-350.75	Krugersand: \$350.00-352.00	\$222.00-224.00	
Sovereign: \$350.50-351.00	\$51.75-52.75	\$85.00-86.50	\$111.75-52.75
Palladium: \$575.25 (\$235.75)	Silver: \$4.07 (\$2.57)	Platinum: \$111.75 (\$72.70)	

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No	Company	Group	Share or lots
1	Arjo Wiggins	Paper, Print	1
2	Whitbread A	Breweries	1
3	Ferrero	Industrial	1
4	Foris	Industrial	1
5	Ramadan (H)	Industrial	1
6	Kinross	Mining	1
7	Parliament A	Telecom	1
8	British Gas	Oil, Gas	1
9	Talbot Chemical	Industrial	1
10	Heineken	Breweries	1
11	Evered Burton	Building, Rds	1
12	NFC	Transport	1
13	Sieba	Industrial	1
14	Tarmac	Building, Rds	1
15	FKI	Electrical	1
16	Bridport-Gentry	Industrial	1
17	Blacks Ltd	Drum, Rds	1
18	Ashted	Building, Rds	1
19	LBMS Plc	Industrial	1
20	GKN	Industrial	1
21	Fairfax A	Breweries	1
22	Readers	Industrial	1
23	Druck	Electrical	1
24	Barclays	Bank, Disc	1
25	Unicom	Industrial	1
26	Nat West	Bank, Disc	1
27	Redland	Building, Rds	1
28	Medway-Spencer	Drum, Rds	1
29	Midland	Industrial	1
30	Grand Mer	Breweries	1
31	Misc Bros	Drum, Rds	1
32	Lac-San	Industrial	1
33	Flaxford	Paper, Print	1
34	Laing D	Building, Rds	1
35	Clydebank	Industrial	1
36	Rugby Group	Building, Rds	1
37	Prudential	Insurance	1
38	Contraids	Chem, Plastics	1
39	Yorkshire TV	Leisure	1
40	Br Aerospace	Motors, Aircraft	1

Please take into account any minus signs

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If you have ticked off your eighth share in our Match The Shares game today, claim your prize by telephoning 0254 53272 between 10.00am and 3.30pm (see the Sunday Times for full details)

Two winners equally shared the Portfolio Plus prize of £2,000. They are Mr G Drake of Egham, Surrey and Mr T Betts of West Wickham, Kent.

1993 High Low Company Price % Net Yld % P/E

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
403	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
404	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
405	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
406	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
407	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
408	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
409	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
410	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
411	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
412	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
413	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
414	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
415	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
416	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
417	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
418	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
419	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
420	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2

BANKS, DISCOUNT, HP

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
421	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
422	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
423	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
424	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
425	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
426	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
427	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
428	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
429	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
430	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2

BREWERIES

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
431	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
432	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
433	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
434	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
435	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
436	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
437	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
438	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
439	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
440	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2

BUILDING, ROADS

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
441	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
442	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
443	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
444	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
445	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
446	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
447	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
448	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
449	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
450	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2

Business Services

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
451	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
452	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
453	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
454	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
455	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
456	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
457	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
458	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
459	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
460	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2

Chemicals, Plastics

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
461	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
462	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
463	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
464	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
465	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
466	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
467	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
468	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
469	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
470	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2

Drum, Stores

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
471	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
472	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
473	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
474	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
475	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
476	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
477	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
478	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
479	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
480	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2

Electricals

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
481	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
482	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
483	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
484	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
485	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
486	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
487	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
488	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
489	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
490	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2

Food

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
491	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
492	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
493	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
494	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
495	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
496	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
497	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
498	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
499	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
500	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2

Hotels, Caterers

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	%	Net Yld	%	P/E
501	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
502	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
503	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
504	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
505	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
506	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
507	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
508	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
509	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2
510	340	340	Alloy	340	0	11.4	3.3	14.2

Industrial

149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	149	1
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As the fate of the *Observer* once more hangs in the balance, three experts give their views on the newspaper's future

The case for The Guardian

The speed of events in Fleet Street never ceases to astonish. It was only 13 years ago that Tiny Rowland of Lonrho was considered a possible buyer of Times Newspapers. He denied any interest but bought the *Observer* instead. Now there is a serious possibility that debt-ridden Lonrho may sell its loss-making paper to *The Independent* for £12.2 million plus a 15 per cent shareholding in its parent company, the Newspaper Publishing Company headed by Andreas Whittam Smith. Merger into *The Independent* on Sunday would then be its obvious fate.

Should anyone be particularly interested apart from the staff? Many readers are losing interest; circulation has declined from around 900,000 in 1981 to some 500,000 today; its pathetic pursuit of Tiny Rowland's vendetta with the Fayed brothers over Harrods has sullied its good name; the magazine's inclusion of soft-porn pictures of Madonna has damaged any claim to good taste; constant re-vamps have diminished interest in its style.

Nonetheless I for one am appalled at the thought of closure. It would silence for ever one of the few voices in the press just left of centre, even if it has been a little quavery of late. It would reduce the quality of arts coverage in our national press. It would shut off the tap of shrewd economic analysis on its business pages. And it would end the steady stream of investigative stories

that enliven its news pages. Above all a continuous existence for 200 years has given the *Observer* a patina of authority and a role in the democratic process that is denied to any newspaper, however inventive, that has been around for less than a decade.

The *Observer's* long existence has given it a patina of authority

Of course there is a possibility of survival. *The Guardian* has put in a solid bid and would use all its resources to keep the *Observer* afloat. Peter Preston, the editor, has shown that despite being in the editorial chair of *The Guardian* since 1975 he is still a sparkling innovator: his second tabloid section has proved a brilliant success. The whole editorial philosophy of the paper is congenial to the *Observer*. No one can doubt that the existing staff of the *Observer* would not only be relieved but positively inspired by a shift in ownership to the Scott Trust.

This trust was established in 1936 to fend off the attentions of the Inland Revenue and the possible ambitions of Lord Beaverbrook. It was re-constituted in 1948 with the same ultimate aim, namely to ensure that the paper continues "on the same lines and in the same spirit as heretofore". But

as the sole owner of the paper the trust is not allowed to compete with Whittam Smith by offering to sell shares or options or a partnership. This seems to have given an edge to *The Independent* group so far as Lonrho is concerned.

Hopes for the survival of the *Observer* thus appear to rest with the intervention of the Monopolies Commission. But if Lonrho were to convince Michael Heseltine, President of the Board of Trade, that it could no longer support the *Observer's* losses and needed

as much money as it could get for its own survival, he might allow the deal to go ahead on free market grounds, without any such reference. It may be recalled that in the days of Margaret Thatcher's premiership, John Biffen, then trade secretary, appeared to give only cursory consideration to the prospects of *The Sunday Times* surviving on its own and waded through the Murdoch bid for Times Newspapers with all speed.

Today the situation is different. *The Guardian* bid is not too far below that of its rivals. And even if the effect on employment is seen as of no importance, the effect on the public interest cannot so easily be disregarded. It is true that a Guardian-controlled *Observer* might generally be numbered among the critics of Conservative government but in the interests of free speech in a democratic society it would be seen as exceptionally self-serving if Mr Heseltine waded through a deal that would silence a political opponent. He made a hash of handling the original mine closure programme. He should be exceptionally careful to see that the public interest is properly safeguarded this time.

CHARLES WINTOUR
The author is a former editor of the *Evening Standard*



The players, clockwise from top left, Donald Treford, Andreas Whittam Smith, Tiny Rowland and a leading article carried by the *Observer* last Sunday

Merger makes sense

Assuming that the supply of megalomaniacs has dried up, the two contenders for the dubious prize of the *Observer* are *The Independent* and *The Guardian*. What is it in for them?

The former has the more obvious economic case. *The Independent* on Sunday is in desperate competition with the *Observer* for bottom place in a quality Sunday market which cannot support four profitable titles. A merger could well produce a journal with a circulation around 700,000, a comfortable second in its market with every expectation of making profits. For *The Guardian* there is probably some gain in linking

directly a daily paper with a compatible Sunday. *The Guardian* and *Observer* form an excellent match with good opportunities for cost savings, although only if the *Observer* in practice is completely subsumed into *The Guardian's* operations. But the Sunday quality market would stay as before, with the new *Observer* and *Independent* competing even more bitterly and expensively for the crumbs from *The Sunday Times* table.

The special pleading of journalists about the great history and unique qualities of the *Observer* has now crystallised into a simple slogan: "Guardian good, Independent bad." Lacking any

genuine economic rationale, the Monopolies Commission has always tended to be swayed by this type of blarney. If it therefore rejected *The Independent's* bid, Lonrho would probably be so desperate to rid itself of the demonised *Observer* that it would accept an offer from *The Guardian* far below the rumoured £20 million. That would gain *The Guardian* in the short term a splendid capitalist victory, but, considering the ferocity of the quality Sunday market, one which could eventually prove to be pyrrhic.

HAROLD LIND
The author is a media analyst

Where ethics beat politics

At the height of his reputation as editor and (in all but name) proprietor of the *Observer*, David Astor circulated a memo to his small staff entitled "On the Soul of the Paper". In it he stipulated that "ethics matter more than politics". That was 1959, three years after Astor had assailed the Suez invasion with the unvarnished words: "We had not realised that our Government was capable of such folly and crookedness."

After 20 years, the future of the *Observer* is now in jeopardy, and there is the wringing of hands and the familiar invocation of democracy in peril that goes up whenever a Fleet Street title is threatened. More than most, *Observer* journalists believe theirs is an important voice, and their beloved paper a vulnerable baroque tossed on perilous seas. The *Observer's* survival, they argue, is too important to be left to the whim of a proprietor or the harsh forces of the market place.

In these moments of hazard, and in 20 years as a member of the *Observer* staff I lived through at least three comparable crises, there is a tendency to turn to the distinguished past as a justification for a continuing future. The paper itself on Sunday cited the commitment made in the first issue in 1791 to be "unbiased by prejudice, uninfluenced by party".

Of course, every effort must be made to save the *Observer*, but for what it might again become rather than for either a glorious past or a diminished present. I quote Astor, not out of nostalgia, but because his *Observer* had an agenda, a reason for existence beyond simply appearing each Sunday. At home it stood for such liberal reform as ending the death penalty, and abroad for colonial freedom and vigilance against totalitarianism. The paper set forth a moral agenda for a decent world.

To work there, even as a young reporter, was to feel part

of a purpose. The holy grail was the truth, and the medium elegant writing.

Astor was not infallible. Before he retired in 1975, his post-war agenda had been fulfilled and he had grown too removed from a changing world to devise a new blueprint.

For four years, with Donald Treford now at the helm, the *Observer* enjoyed the protection and absentee ownership of an American oil company. When, inevitably, it lost interest, Tiny Rowland and Lonrho moved in. A worried staff mobilised, and we scurried to the then industry secretary, John Biffen, who referred the sale to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. We got the best deal going, and a board of independent directors who may yet save the title.

But the constant battle for survival and the antagonism felt by many journalists for Lonrho took their toll. There was no new agenda comparable to Astor's vision: the great opportunity to oppose Thatcherism, consistently and constructively, was squandered.

There is a tendency to be mesmerised by *The Sunday Times* dating back to Astor's last days. But it is not the role of the *Observer* to be all things to all readers. At its best it is a nippy and well-armed frigate sent to sea against a great galleon. Its market remained: the *Observer* was simply not satisfying it.

Britain has seldom been as confused as now. The need for coherent and well-articulated voices from left of centre has never been greater.

There is no argument for sustaining the present leadership of the *Observer*; the old lags have had their chance. There is, however, every argument for its survival as a revitalised journal of clear thinking and accurate and stylish reporting. Ethics still matter more than politics.

ROBERT CHESSEHYRE
The author is a former executive and writer on the *Observer*.

BATTLE OF THE SUNDAYS — MARCH '93

Paper	Av Sun sale	Compared Feb 93	Compared Mar 92	%+/-	% Market Share	All titles
S Times	1,264,142	11,095	81,866	6.92	46.51	7.87
Observer	504,331	-16,078	-41,247	-7.58	18.40	3.14
S Telegraph	573,641	-8,491	-16,313	-3.30	21.02	3.57
Independent	387,511	-13,493	-2,222	0.56	14.20	2.41

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Now for the bad news ...

Why is the news so gloomy ... why don't you give us more good news? — questions raised with depressing regularity on virtually every occasion when television people brush with their viewers in the world outside "the box".

Some old assumptions about television news need to be firmly challenged, not least because of the huge growth in the power of the medium. Research in Britain and America shows that some 80 per cent of the population regard television news as their primary source of information.

We are increasingly, shaping the psyche of the nation — conditioning the mood in which people go to bed at night, and the frame of mind with which they face each day. That imposes upon us a responsibility to present a more accurate mirror image of the balance of events and issues that affect our viewers and the world in which they live.

News editors across the world — in newspapers as well as television — stress the need for young reporters to hunt for conflict and criticism. If they don't find it, fewer of their stories are used. So the need to

Why doesn't the BBC broadcast more good news? **Martyn Lewis** examines how old values die hard

be productive, to please, and to see their work on air, leads the newcomers rapidly into old habits. And so another generation of journalists is innocently infected with the old set of standards and judgments. Try to sell any TV news editor a story of success or achievement. Unless it is a relatively "slow" news day, reactions range from "Sorry, no room" to "Not a puff for that" or, grudgingly, "We're looking a bit thin — it might make a couple of lines."

You quickly find out that it is always the Good News stories that are demoted or dropped if there is any pressure on time or space. Judgments on the relative value of news stories have, on the whole, come to be based on the extent to which things go wrong. The bigger the scale of the tragedy, the

greater the images of the disaster, the more weight and prominence it acquires. So success is permanently demoted on the news agenda — and, over a period of time, there is a relentless drip-feed into the viewer's mind that we live in a society where achievement takes a back seat to conflict, disaster and failure.

Our proper desire not to fall victim to the world of PR has developed into such a high degree of scepticism that it makes us overly dismissive of stories that illustrate the positive side of life. There are other factors at work too. Let me give you examples — from my own professional experience — of the kind of news stories that have disappeared from our daily television diet. Two years ago, the workforce of the

Rover Car company held a vote on the management's plan to introduce Japanese-style working practices. A decision to reject the plan would almost certainly have triggered a video report on the main evening news. But, by a narrow majority, the plan was accepted: we did not run the story at all. And yet that vote was crucial in laying the foundation for the company's current success.

Last month, another car company, Vauxhall, reported pre-tax profits of £223 million — up by 69 per cent on the previous year. Not reported.

Even when positive stories are covered, note how much less emphasis they are often given. On April 9, 1990, Ford switched production from Bridgend and Swansea to two factories in Germany because of "the unreliability of the supply of parts". TV news produced a two-minute video report on that. But just four days earlier, when Vauxhall chose Port Talbot for a £160 million investment in preference to Germany, that merited a mere forty seconds.

● An edited extract from a speech given in Los Angeles yesterday by the BBC newscaster.

Viewers pillory BBC chief over secret, but tax-efficient, pay deal

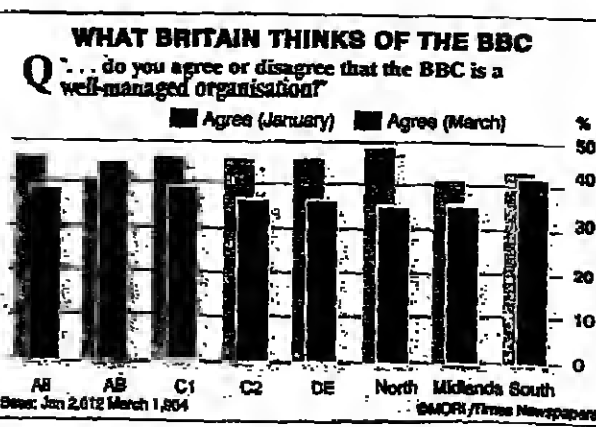
Public confidence in the BBC has been severely shaken by the dispute over the tax affairs of John Birt, the corporation's director-general, according to a poll conducted for *The Times* by the market research organisation MORI.

The findings show that more than one in three people believe that the BBC is not a well-managed organisation, compared with about one in five people in January — before the disclosure that Mr Birt was avoiding tax on his pay from the corporation by working as a freelance.

The latest results, based on a survey carried out three weeks after the disclosures of Mr Birt's pay arrangements, show a 10.5 per cent swing away from confidence in the BBC's management. The figures represent an embarrassment for the corporation as they coincide with reports this week that Mr Birt has asked for a pay rise of between £40,000 and £55,000.

Mr Birt, who was employed on a freelance contract for six years as deputy director-general, announced his intention to join the staff of the BBC on

Birt falls out of favour



March 1, but has still not signed a contract.

Robert Worrester, the chairman of MORI, says that the findings show that the disclosures about Mr Birt's tax position have had remarkable resonance with the public as the number of people who did not have an opinion on the BBC

management fell significantly in the second survey.

"The change from 21 per cent of people thinking the BBC is not well managed at the end of January to 35 per cent at the end of March is just fantastic. You very rarely see such a big change in public opinion over such a

short period of time," he says. A breakdown of the results show that the BBC has lost confidence most among lower social classes, people who live in the Midlands and the North of England, women and those aged over 55 years.

Whereas 45 per cent of respondents in the lower DE socio-economic bracket agreed that the corporation was well managed in January, only 36 per cent did in March. Similarly, support for the way the BBC is run from people questioned in the North of England fell from 48 per cent to 35 per cent over the same period.

In the AB socio-economic class, however, support for the BBC's management actually rose from 42 to 44 per cent, possibly indicating that some younger professionals living in the South of England approved of the "tax efficiency" of the director-general's financial arrangements.

ALEXANDRA FREAN
● MORI interviewed 2,012 adults from January 21-25 for a poll commissioned by Reader's Digest. It questioned 1,904 adults between March 25-29 for *The Times*.



THEATRE page 30
James Wilby is too cool
and English as Joseph
K in The Trial
at the Young Vic

ARTS

TELEVISION page 31
Morecambe's peer?
Lynne Truss reviews
a profile of the
comedian Ernie Wise



Rodney Milnes on the plans for the new regime's first season at English National Opera

Silver lining in St Martin's Lane

Opera being what it is — planned anything up to four years ahead — there can be something slightly bogus about a new regime announcing its first season. After all, much of what they announce must already have been in place. That is less true than usual about the English National Opera's 1993-4 plans, unveiled yesterday by the new general director, Dennis Marks, and the new music director, Sian Edwards.

For a start, ENO has always been a more flexible operation than your average international opera house. New productions can be, and have been, slotted in at a few months' notice. And following the dramatic mass resignation of the Peter Jonas/Mark Elder/David Pountney team two years ago, there is a sense of a clean break with the past, of a new era dawning.

That sense is sharpened by the peculiarly *Götterdämmerung*-ish aura surrounding the last weeks of the departing regime in its self-styled "Power House". Falling box-office receipts, an accumulated deficit of over £2 million, controversy over what is perceived (not altogether justifiably) as a confrontational and possibly even outmoded house production style, all contribute to a desire on both sides of the footlights for a fresh start.

Yet the new season strikes a nice balance between continuity — Elder and Pountney are both returning — and renewal. Only three of the seven new productions were engraved in stone before the change of regime, and elsewhere Marks and Edwards have enjoyed considerable freedom in choice of production teams, revivals and casting. Edwards was engaged to conduct the season's first new staging, *Bohème*, in September, long before her appointment as music director. It will be directed by Steven Pimlott, familiar from the National Theatre, the West End and many opera houses in Europe, but astonishingly enough making his Coliseum debut, along with his designer Tobias Hohelst.

The *Lohengrin* that follows in November is conducted by Elder, with the trusted team of Tim Albery, Hildegard Bechtler and Nicky Gillibrand (ENO *Grimes*, *Opera North* *Carlos*), and is the company's first stab at a new Wagner production since the Ken Russell *Prologue* was aborted five years ago. Pountney returns the following month with Smetana's *The Two Widows*, a favourite piece of his (and mine) that he has directed at Wexford and in Glasgow.

Jonathan Miller — another link with the past — returns for a new *Rosenkavalier* in February with the



Sian Edwards, the new music director of English National Opera, in the Coliseum pit: four other conductors will be making their house debut next season

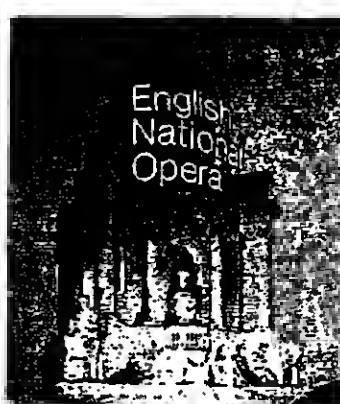
formidable cast of Anne Evans, John Tomlinson, Sally Burgess and Rosemary Joshua, and conducted by the equally formidable Jakob Kreizberg, who set the Downs on fire with his *Jenufa* at Glyndebourne last year. This should be anything but cream-puff Strauss.

Plans for the remaining three new productions were less long-laid. Judith Weir's *Blond Eckbert* (a working title) will be premiered on April 20: it is not quite finished, but it will be conducted by Edwards and produced by Tim Hopkins, another Coliseum debutant. The new *Cost fan tutte* in May 1994, conducted by Nicholas Kok, is a bit of a surprise, a fruit of Marks's investigation of halfway houses between new productions and revivals. This will contain elements of the old designs, but everything else will be new, including the producer Nicolette Molnar and her designer Jacqui Gunn. (At this stage in proceedings, those of sexist bent might remark admiringly on the

number of women involved in the season. But I'm not, so I won't.)

Just as the opening *Bohème* is planned as the first of a series renewing the Puccini repertoire (a *Tritico* is rumoured for the not too distant future), so the new *Jenufa* in June 1994 will herald a new look at Janáček. It will be conducted by Edwards, with Josephine Barstow singing her first Kostelníčka, and with producer and designer (Lucy Bailey and Simon Vincent) new to the house.

The notion of another Janáček cycle is a bold one: the Welsh/Scottish effort is barely cold in its grave, and Glyndebourne is in the middle of its own. For the ENO to launch theirs with the Janáček opera that as far as London is concerned has "belonged" to Covent Garden since 1956 is agreeably saucy. Doubtless the Arts Council's famed clash committee will keep an eye on this, but if every opera company in the country plays Puccini, why shouldn't they all play Janáček as well?



The Coliseum, home of ENO: there is "a new era dawning"

The 11 revivals strike an equally fine balance between the old and the new. The season opens on August 26 with the Alden/Felding *Simon Boccanegra*, with Alexander Rahbari making his debut in the pit and Gregory Yurishin in the title role. *Street Scene*, a box-office draw nowadays, returns with Barstow singing Anna Maurrant. Gra-

ham Vick's productions of *The Rape of Lucretia*, *Figaro's Wedding* and *Eugene Onegin* are revived, the last-named conducted by yet another newcomer, a friend and colleague from Edwards's St Petersburg days, Alexander Polianichko.

The Richard Jones *Fledermaus* was one of the old regime's more controversial offerings, but Jones is already discussing the bits he wants to change (starting, I trust, with the overture). But at least we are spared a threatened revival of Ken Russell's *Princess Ida*: Philip Prowse's *Pearl Fishers*, another box-office draw, gets a welcome airing instead (phew!). The Pountney *Falsstaff* is back after Christmas, conducted by Andrew Litton (house debut), and Philip Langridge returns to sing the title role in Albery's unconventional and harrowing *Peter Grimes*.

Edwards is certainly doing her share of conducting, but four interesting conductors making their house debuts — Kreizberg, Litton, Rahbari and Polianichko —

is something the new management is quietly pleased with, as it is with four new directors and three new designers. That is quite a transfusion of new blood.

And there are new singers to look out for. Roberta Alexander is making her absurdly overdue London stage debut as Mimì, in partnership with the young Yorkshire tenor John Hudson as Rodolfo, engaged after a tip-off from Dennis O'Neill.

However promising the new season, there is no escaping the shadow of the deficit — though the repertoire contains a number of bankable box-office attractions, which should help — or the additional burden of refurbishing the theatre itself. A team of architects is already nosing round the Coliseum devising ways of making it a nicer place to work in and to visit. Not too many months hence, what Marks calls "a modest development" will be proposed. Then follows the task of finding the money to do it, to top up the £13.8 million already raised.

ARTS BRIEFING

So far so good in Sussex

GOOD news is not the natural stuff of newspapers, but there is no other way to dress up a progress report on Glyndebourne's new opera house. The building work is said to be on schedule. The stage, fly-tower and rehearsal rooms are there; the auditorium, a forest of scaffolding, is less recognisable as such, but sample seats are elegant and comfortable. With glowing red brick topped by a shiny gleaming lead roof, Michael Hopkins's design looks even more handsome than it did as a model. Most amazingly, from the lawns it looks no bigger than the old theatre.

And the money is there, says Sir George Christie, Glyndebourne's owner: all but ten per cent of it. Cuning Sir George raised £30 million before the recession started to bite, and will raise the remaining £3 million later in the year, when the nearness of performances in the glamorous new house will concentrate the minds of corporate wavers en end.

● CRISIS looms at the Courtauld Institute of Art in London, where severe cuts are threatening the future of the Conway Library. A unique collection, containing around one million photographs of architecture, sculpture and medieval painting, the Conway has lost half of its £200,000 grant from London University. The remaining £100,000 may soon be further reduced or withdrawn, forcing this major scholarly resource to close.

The Conway's staff are mounting a vigorous fundraising campaign. Pointing out that the only comparable collection, the Bildarchiv Foto Marburg, is financed by Volkswagen, they are appealing for sponsorship. But donations of any size are welcome, and on Thursday the Library has a benefit night, with guided tours at 5.30pm; an hour later Mark Girouard gives a lecture, "Approaching Architecture". Tickets (£15 single, £25 double) from the Conway (071-872 0220).

Last chance...

THE memory of the late Dizzy Gillespie is invoked this week with the visit of the renowned American drummer Paul Motian, a restless inventive player best known for his long associations with the pianists Bill Evans and Keith Jarrett. Motian's latest quintet, The Electric Bebop Band, ends its residency at Ronnie Scott's Club, London W1 (071-439 0747) on Saturday.

Scavengers amid fallen idols

As Russia votes for a new political order, Guy Chazan meets two artists who define Moscow's avant-garde



Over their heads: Vitaly Komar (left) and Alexander Melamid give a performance in Red Square, Moscow

It could only happen in Yeltsin's Russia. A star performance in Red Square by the Laurel and Hardy of Russian art is drowned out by a Muscovite bag lady chanting rude rhymes about Boris Yeltsin. It is Hilda Ogden meets the *Late Show* in downtown Moscow. And Hilda wins hands down.

The event is a happening staged by two of the most famous living Russian avant-garde artists, Vitaly Komar and Alexander Melamid, to mark the birthday of their "hero", Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. Komar stands holding a skull and hourglass while Melamid intones verses from Ecclesiastes under the mock-up of a neon display tableau which the artists envisage placing on Lenin's mausoleum, turning the communist holy-of-holies into a free-floating, functional electronic noticeboard.

But it is the eve of a referendum that may decide President Yeltsin's fate, and not even Moscow's winsome bohemians are safe from the campaign fever sweeping the city's streets. As Melamid recites verses scorning the vanity of grand ideals and the futility of all Utopias, a Nora Baty lookalike in woolen tights chips in with some homespun wisdom of her own.

"So this is what they call reform, it's surgery without chloroform," rants Valya Yeroshenko, a 55-year-old retired construction worker. "Liberalisation, death for the Russian nation," the lumpen bard proclaims.

The audience of critics and artists giggles condescendingly and rushes to offer obeisance to their idols. For them, the first public performance by Komar and Melamid since they left Russia for New York in 1977 is an epoch-making

event, besides which Yeroshenko's catwaul is mere background noise.

"Komar and Melamid are the Marx and Engels of the Moscow art scene," says critic Yekaterina Dyogot. "They are legendary figures." But Yeroshenko is not impressed. "This is disgusting," she scowls, bel-

ieving their ideological meaning, they start being destroyed," says dealer Maria Guelman, owner of the Centre for Contemporary Art, which is exhibiting the electronic tableau. "Look at how the Bolsheviks destroyed churches after the revolution. On the contrary, we want to preserve the mausoleum as a solemn place."

"We were raised in a world where Lenin and Stalin occupied all of life," says Melamid. "They were our first loves. If we lose this [mausoleum]," he adds, "we will lose our life."

Komar, 49, and Melamid, 47, started collaborating in 1960s Moscow, subverting the devices of communist propaganda to create their own crushingly ironic reflection of Soviet reality. But in a strange reversal, the two have recently begun a project to find uses for the redundant communist monuments strewn like frozen mammoths across Russia's vast expanse.

More than a hundred Russian and American artists have joined in the project, which will culminate this summer in an exhibition in New York and Moscow. The electronic line-board is the curtain-raiser. Another proposal envisages turning the Volgograd motherland statue — a massive 72-metre-high monument to the battle of Stalingrad, showing a

woman with uplifted sword summoning her sons to defend the homeland — into a television tower. Another would transform a 90-metre-tall Moscow monument to space exploration into a leisure-pool-style water slide.

Melamid is excited about working in Russia again. For him, Sunday's referendum on Yeltsin's reforms showed a nation defining itself and a ruler reaching out to touch his people — an exciting paradigm for artists who see art's purpose as "engaging as many people as possible".

There is no people as such here yet. The referendum is the first attempt to touch them. Who lives out in the sticks? Monkeys? We don't know, nobody's ever tried to find out," Melamid says. "Yeltsin wants to legitimise himself as a voice of the people," Melamid continues, "and we want to legitimise ourselves as American artists."

With this in mind, the two émigrés have hired a consumer research firm to conduct an opinion poll on what kind of art Americans want, so that they can produce it. They say the need arises when the Soviet Union fell. "Culturally we are Soviet — that is something that doesn't exist," says Melamid. The survey will help them fill the void, just as Yeltsin's referendum will help determine what kind of country post-Soviet Russia will be.

The happening in Red Square is part of that process too. It showed the two lost boys of Russian art gambling on the rubbish heap of history, salvaging symbols like magpies from a graveyard of fallen idols and casting a mischievously subversive eye over their country's catadysms.

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Conductor Bernard Haitink

On May 1 each year the musicians of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, the Berliner Philharmoniker, perform their annual Europa Concert. The members of the orchestra themselves choose the country and the city which will host the concert. This year, the unique event — which will be televised live to 15 countries — will be held in London at the Royal Albert Hall, by arrangement with Harold Holt Limited and the sponsors of the concert, Daimler-Benz.

The conductor at this Saturday's concert will be Bernard Haitink, and the soloists will be the talented young German violinist Frank Peter Zimmermann. The programme will comprise Tchaikovsky's *Fantasy Overture*, *Romeo and Juliet*, Mozart's Violin Concerto No 3 K216 in G major, and Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*.

The concert begins at the unusual time of 10.30am. The arena will be unseated in "Proms-style" and has been made available to music stu-

dents and other young people. Ticket prices range from £5 to £30 and are available from the Royal Albert Hall Box Office (071-589 8212). A percentage of all ticket receipts will go to the Prince's Youth Business Trust.

As part of this special event, *Times* readers can:

1 Buy a ticket for £5 and enter a draw for a seat worth £10, £20 or even £30. Entrants are guaranteed a seat worth at least £10. This offer is limited to the first 500 applicants.

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...well performed it may be
...right
...band

صكنا من الاصل

Previewing Video Positive 93 in Liverpool, Joseph Williams is intrigued but unconvinced by the pretentious claims of video art

A dotty sort of artistry

Put down the palette and brush, pack up the easel and switch on the video monitor. The artform of the 21st century, according to its practitioners, will be electronic manipulating images and sounds through cameras and monitors to create bizarre and disorientating effects. Imagine a surreal pop video directed by Peter Greenaway and played on a large screen — complete with superimposed images and scenes that look "meaningful", music changed into eerie sounds, and voices that seem to talk flappodoo — and you have a rough idea of video art.

But are we being taken for an electronic ride? Is video art a flickering gimmick foisted on us by a generation of artists who have abandoned basic drawing skills? Apparently not. This week, Liverpool is launching Video Positive 93, a festival of "creative video and electronic media art". More than 200 artists will be exhibiting at eight venues. Spread over the city's top galleries — the Tate, Bluecoat, Open Eye and Walker — the festival combines scores of screenings and collaborative works with the 15 major installations that are the centrepiece of the jamboree. Many works are interactive: infrared sensors detect the presence of a visitor and trigger off the system.

The images in video art unfold rapidly. In *History With Disaster* by Andrew Stones, the words "angel" and "soul" are flashed across the screen, with quotations from Francis Bacon, the 17th-century philosopher, illuminated against a richly-textured backdrop. We hear the monotone voice of a bored-sounding woman, but what she says is meaningless. Shots of clocks and chairs rapidly appear and disappear.

The word "eventually" appears on screen. The sky burns up, and scenes of annihilation are interlarded with quotations from Robert Oppenheimer, the nuclear physicist. It all seems to point to the notion of eschatological despair.

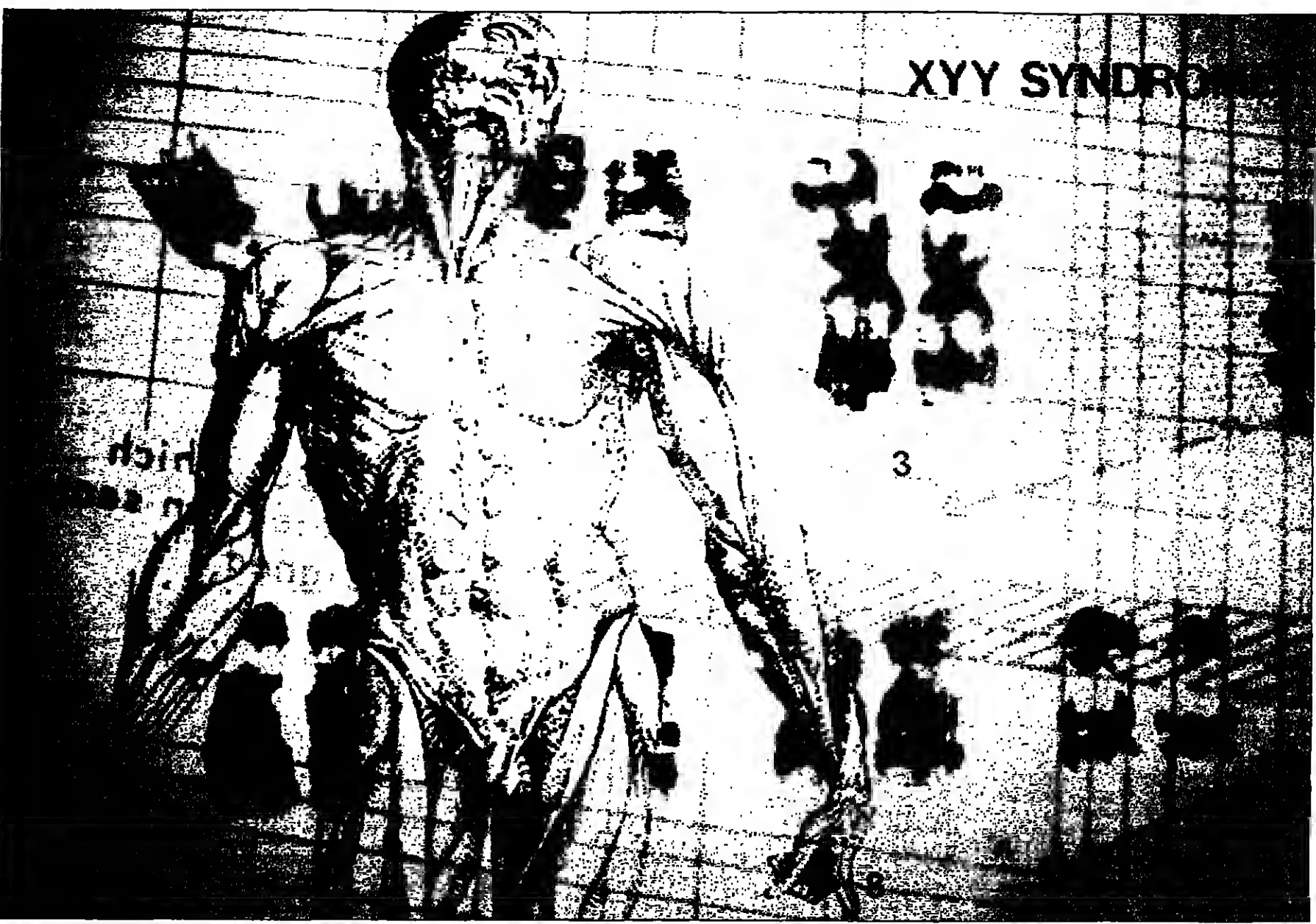
But so many unrelated ideas are tossed in that the whole concept looks pretentious. Eddie Berg, director of the festival, believes that adverse reaction was just as fierce at the advent of photography in the 19th century: "We need to broaden our perception of what art is. Artists choose to use video as the medium in which to express their ideas, and it's only fair we should judge them by those ideas and not because they use a certain technology."

"For too long there's been a prejudice against artists using technology, because the view is that they're artisans not artists. In fact the artistry is complex, not just technically but in terms of the whole process of realising ideas through images."

Video art is not as new as it sounds. Nam June Paik, the Korean-born performance artist, pioneered it in the 1960s, when he compared the millions of phosphor dots on colour television screens with the pointillist paintings of Seurat — the mixing of the dots takes place in the eye of the beholder. In 1962, Paik placed hundreds of television sets, up-ended, in rows along the foyer of the Pompidou Centre in Paris. He believed that they could become sculptures themselves, as in *TV Garden*, where he scattered the sets like plants among lush tropical vegetation.

But Paik is known to laugh at the multi-layered meanings his critics find in his works. He is a performing showman as much as an artist, with an artistic sideline in smashing violins and playing the piano with an axe.

The problem with today's video works is that we are expected to take them seriously, even when the result fails to merit that level of attention. *Nantes-Trippeh* by Bill Viola, one of America's most established video artists, was exhibited in Düsseldorf last year. It comprises three large screens: one shows a film of a woman giving birth, another a swimmer underwater,



Big screen: *The Observatory* by Simon Robertshaw. "I'm a firm believer that art is not about technology, art is about communication. It's the idea that's important."

and the last is of a patient dying. Call it a triptych on the cycle of life and death and it sounds grand and solemn, but the work is mind-numbingly repetitive and dull.

In *Metaphor* by Cathy Vogan, who will be exhibiting at Video Positive 93, an anguished face looms out of the ocean. A dead tree soars up to the clouds. A naked man gently strokes a block of gnarled wood, comparing his wrinkled skin with the dead bark. But where lies the artistry? The comparison of tree with man is delivered in too clichéd and facile a manner to intrigue us, and the work comes over as an odd monologue performance art looking like bad theatre.

Video art is better when it offers spectacular, entertaining or humorous images. *Men of Vision*, by the Australian artist Peter Callas, projects onto suspended screens the "visions" of Lenin and Marat. The animated images are frantic and comic: little heads popping out of eyes, and outstretched hands moving forward and back. The effect is Monty Pythonesque.

But the extravagant messages about society and identity these artists seek to deliver in nearly packaged catalogue statements do not tally with the disjointed and often silly images of their work. Walking around the installations of Liverpool's last video festival in 1991, I felt that the cacophony of video tracks and the incongruous imagery suggested an art form too alien and cold to be moving. It lacked the human touch of brush on canvas or chisel on stone. It was an experience no more artistic than pressing the buttons of an interactive video at the Science Museum. Were we not being tele-diddled?

Video artists argue that their medium is time-based: closer to music or film than to painting and sculpture, which traditionally offer static, "finished" objects. And unlike ordinary television, which we can watch passively and unthinkingly, video art invites us to take part in the installations — for instance, by walking on the images projected on a gallery floor. Video Positive 91 drew 35,000 visitors.

But perhaps many of them were simply attracted by fast-moving images.

"It's an art form in its own right, mainly because the issues, or the debate, or the themes that are present in the work are similar to those of other art forms," says Simon Robertshaw, who lectures on electronic art and is exhibiting at the festival. With a fine art background, he regards himself as an artist who uses video as his medium, not as a "video artist". "I'm a firm believer that art is not about technology, art is about communication. You can communicate through painting and through video — it's the idea that's important."

The suspicion remains, however, that video art will only encourage artists who cannot draw, who need only edit some shots of landscapes, speed up the movement of clouds, and hide it all behind a daft conceptual message that nobody can understand or refute. Any image can be made to appear symbolic, and you can dream up a hundred recondite meanings for one work and make them all apply. But devoid of any real narrative structure, the works end up like short "arty" films, their sound and fury signifying nothing.

Video Positive 93 opens on Saturday and runs throughout May at various venues in Liverpool. For details, telephone 051-709 2663.

RADIO REVIEW

Hits and misses in vocal range

AS *Romeo and Juliet* begins, the Capulet youths are laughing as they talk about raping the Montague girls — "cutting off the heads of the maidens" as they put it in their macho way. Listening to Kenneth Branagh's Renaissance Theatre production of the play on Sunday night (Radio 3), you felt that Shakespeare would have had no difficulty understanding the Bosnian war.

That is the great strength of Branagh's new production: it reminds you again and again of Shakespeare's amazing gift for evoking a whole milieu and a wealth of individual personality in a handful of words. From Juliet's nurse (Judi Dench in brilliant form) to Sheila Hancock's Lady Capulet, the whole bustling city of Verona comes to life.

John Gielgud plays Friar Laurence like a well-meaning old prep-school master, but is quite irresistible: Derek Jacobi, as Mercutio, sometimes seems as puzzled by his own wit as modern audiences are, but he dies very movingly.

Unfortunately, the love story is the weakest part of the production. Shakespeare's tragic irony comes over powerfully, but the lovers themselves are disappointing. Branagh as Romeo plays with his voice, dropping suddenly from soprano to bass; he fills the lines with meaningless pauses, or else stresses too many words in a line for it to have any clear meaning. It does not sound like a real, emotion-driven Romeo: it just sounds like Branagh putting on a performance.

Samantha Bond as Juliet has the opposite problem. She plays the part in a voice that at first makes you think of a modern girl in a fruity sitcom, then turns thin and shrill.

Yet, at the supreme moments of the play, both Branagh and Bond are transformed. In the morning scene, when they hear the warning lark singing, their voices have a quiet, simple beauty that is really moving; and they die with the same voices.

DERWENT MAY
An audio-cassette of this production is published by Random Century at £15.99.

DANCE: New leads, old problems

No showcase yet

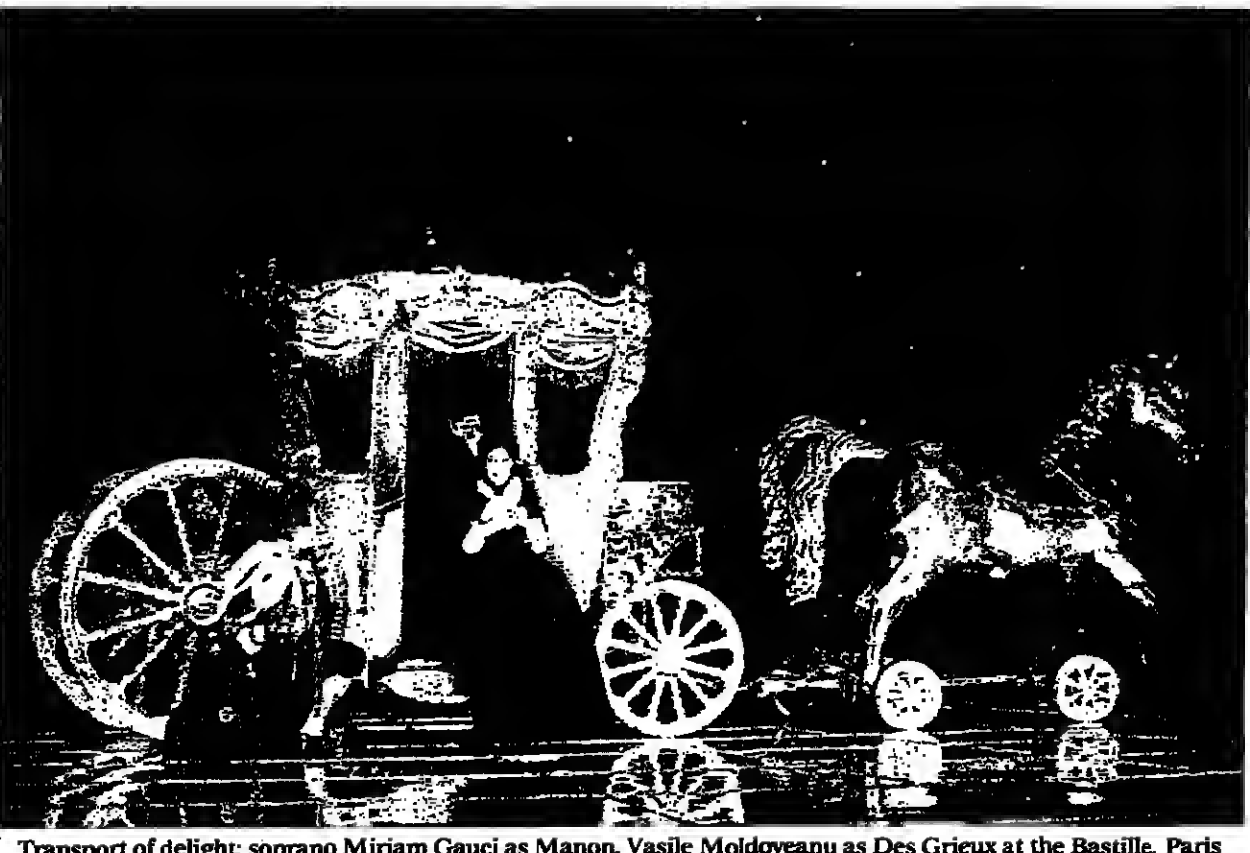
Don Quixote
Covent Garden

I WISH I could share the enthusiasm of those who see the Baryshnikov slimmer down of *Don Quixote* as a wonderful showcase of dancing. In theory it ought to be a choreographic distillation, retaining only an evocative residue of the problematic story. But in practice the haemoglobin has been pumped out, leaving a weakly-paced ballet with one dance following the other unvaryingly.

Is that why Royal Ballet performances seem so anaemic? Given their looks, abilities and apparent command of the stage, Leanne Benjamin and José Manuel Carreño ought to have dazzled: but somehow their closing pas de deux fell just short of matching the real fireworks at the end. It lacked edge and, at times, secureness, even though Carreño has a gift for dramatically decelerating pirouettes and Benjamin, only but long-limbed, composes attractive shapes.

Earlier they had achieved more. Benjamin has vivid features, vivacity and a sensitive way of forming her dance phrases. Carreño unveiled those beautiful jumps with bracingly clear lines that helped make him a hit when he was with English National Ballet. If anything he looks too boyishly pure for Basilio, whose mind surely does have the odd roguish thought. But he does display a confident comic touch. This was Carreño's official Royal Ballet debut in a lead role. They have made a good catch.

NADINE MEISNER



Transport of delight: soprano Miriam Gauci as Manon. Vasile Moldoveanu as Des Grieux at the Bastille, Paris

City glitter, provincial virtue

John Higgins sees *Manon in Paris* and *Il Trovatore* in Toulouse

Manon and Des Grieux after their first meeting in Amiens. The lovers are encased in a hall of gilded mirrors until the final act. They can see themselves set on a course of self-destruction, while on a more practical level the size of the Bastille's stage is cut by screens, which almost certainly help to project the voices into the vast auditorium.

In the rôle there is a striking young Maltese soprano, Miriam Gauci, whose voice has all the warmth and suppleness needed for the part. Poor Manon has precious little chance in Puccini to play the *grande dame* — Massenet indulged her more — but she has opportunity in plenty for impetuousness, wilfulness and finally a hefty dose of self-pity. Gauci is mistress of all of these musical moods and an artist to be watched.

Her Des Grieux, Vasile Moldoveanu, found the youthful frivolity of the first act hard going. Among students he comes in the mature category. But once stronger emotions are required he showed himself a natural Puccini tenor with plenty of lustre still left in the voice. Jeffrey Black allowed Lescat vestiges of decency as he switches from one side to another, while Jules Bastin made it clear that Geronte's fussiness covered a heart of stone.

At Toulouse the opera leaves its elegant home at the Capitole once a season for the larger spaces of the Halle aux Grains (Corn Exchange). It is a domed building, a plush version of London's Roundhouse, where the audience perches above and around the stage. For *Trovatore* this was filled with caves (gypsies, for the use of) and a wooden structure resembling the end of a pier, where the Spanish gentry could cross swords and hold executions. Hubert Monloup was clearly intent on providing the cast with an easy space in which to sing, and the director, Nicolas Joel, was similarly disinclined to invest Verdi with any special subtlety.

Fortunately a quartet of exceptionally sturdy singers was on hand for the leading roles. Alain Fondary, a last

TELEVISION REVIEW

You can still see the join

THERE is an old Chinese proverb that says, while there are thousands of natural tops in the world to choose from, there are some people who cannot meet a cripple without mending their feet. Last night's *40 Minutes* about Ernie Wise (BBC 2) brought that proverb to mind with considerable force. I mean, what sort of thing would you try not to say in the vicinity of Ernie Wise? That Ernie Morecambe was funnier? That little Ern was a mere stooge? That a man could be a star, yet lack talent? Would you suggest that if, nowadays, he were asked to appear in pantos, it was only because of his "television name"?

Perhaps you would. But the odd thing about this *40 Minutes* was that Ernie raised all these matters himself, which made it all the more uncomfortable to watch. Interspersed with pointed clips from the shows ("Without me," said Eric, "You'd be no good, would you?"), little Ern at 67 alternately braved his fate (apparently offering himself for any kind of work) and gave hostages to fortune in the form of self-deprecatory jokes. He retained his dignity only by claiming to be a song-and-dance man, not a stooge at all. But on the other hand, what else could you call him, if he agreed to appear in this film?

One started to wonder what the participants had been told, particularly Ernie himself. Bill Cotton thought it was a tribute: "He was one of the best straight men who ever walked the boards." Meanwhile Eddie Braben, the *Morecambe and Wise* Show scriptwriter, said, "The person I concentrated on was Ernie; I gave him a character. In the end it was a double act without a straight man." Ernie himself was shown in various locations — treading the boards at the Blackpool panto, backstage doing his make-up, relaxing at his second home in Florida, and standing at the helm of a Thames leisure cruiser — but if any of these were supposed to make him look good, it was either a forlorn hope or a hypocritical one.

What a rotten thing to do to someone. "I would have liked success in America," he said brightly, in all sincerity. "I would have liked to have been a world star... I'm still on my way to Hollywood." Oh, stop it, for God's sake. Stop going on about feet. Ernie Wise does not deserve this: if he wants to pursue a solo career after 46 years with Eric Morecambe, then let him do it in peace. I don't make him John Osborne's Entertainer.

The poignancy of Ernie's widowhood can be taken too far, in any case. As any fan will gladly attest, it was the script quality that was paramount with *The Morecambe and Wise Show*. Life without Eddie Braben, or without Sid and Dick, is at least as drastic an idea as life without Eric.

Recently Eric Morecambe's son spoke on the radio about the play he had written about the



On his own: Ernie Wise

Morecambe and Wise partnership. "Was there tension between them?" he was asked, but unfortunately he didn't understand, so we shall never know.

The assumption about double acts, that they are ersatz marriages (and of course Morecambe and Wise did sit together in the same bed) is a bit trite, really. From last night's programme it was clear that Ernie misses his old Dad much more than he misses Eric. It was the kindest feature of this *40 Minutes*, in the end, that at least it didn't show him crying.

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Global Forum '94

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WEDNESDAY APRIL 28 1993

RFU finds breaches of amateurism are rife

THE amateur ethos of rugby union, the sacred element at the heart of its structure, has been found to be permeated with abuse in breach of the sport's rules, a Rugby Football Union (RFU) report has concluded.

The report, circulating within senior English clubs, has forced the RFU to confront a situation it denied existed to any serious extent. It reveals numerous illustrations of disregard for the amateur principles which officials at Twickenham insisted had more to do with imagination than reality.

A working party set up by the RFU to investigate growing allegations of financial

benefits for amateur players has found the claims to be substantially true. Its report, *Inducements to move, incentives to stay and other illegal payments*, says: "We believe that the greatest current threats to amateurism come from inducements and other illegal payments." It says many examples of such payments have been received and produces a "brief but not exhaustive" list.

The list reveals the ways in which so-called amateur players have received monies and inducements to play rugby union. They arise through excessive expenses, cars, after-dinner speaking, fictitious employment, cash play-

ing bonuses, clothing, fictitious expenses, housing-mortgage support, writing rugby articles, appearance money, overseas trips, luxury items, free or subsidised accommodation, car passenger expenses, fictitious appearances, sponsorship, holidays and family support. Virtually every means by which clubs have defied the amateur rules are included.

The working party, which first met in January, has received "very valuable help and advice" in preparing the report from senior figures, including Peter Ford, the chairman of Gloucester, Tony Russ, Leicester's director of coaching, Neil Hannah and

Peter Bills looks at the severe measures proposed to prevent abuse of rugby union's principles by financial benefits to players

Alwynne Evans, respectively the chairman and secretary of the Senior Clubs Association, Barrie Cortess, Northampton's director of coaching, and Rob Smith, the Wasps club coach. The report says that all supported the fundamental principles of no financial benefits for playing and money correctly raised from off-the-field activities to be kept within the game.

The recommended speed of implementation of the new

regulations reflects the concern. The report suggests that they should start on July 9, a month after a proposed meeting with the senior clubs. That suggests a peremptory dismissal of any protests from the clubs about lack of warning. The working party feels that those who have flouted the laws of the game can expect little consideration. The recommendations are set to be approved by the full committee of the RFU on

Friday and some proposed measures will bring furious protest.

Mileage allowance rates, one of the favoured methods of putting money into players' pockets, is to be set at 20 pence per mile, below present rates. A meal allowance of no more than £20 a day will be paid only on the production of receipts. Proof will also be required by receipt if the costs of overnight accommodation are to be met. Bed and breakfast can be charged only if authorised by the club treasurer.

There is also a clampdown on the use of motor cars by players, a long-employed method of "rewarding" play-

ers who change clubs. Hiring a car will be accepted only if economic to both the club and player and has been authorised by the club treasurer. Providing a player with a car for a season or unspecified period of time is to be banned.

It is impossible to estimate how much money players have received in breach of the rules from clubs. Although outlawed under the game's strict laws of amateurism, infringements have become increasingly widespread.

Now, the working party has recommended a checklist of permitted and non-permitted activities for material benefit. But it says they are for players

below the international squad. This suggests three fears: first, of becoming involved in debate with the International Rugby Board (IRB), which has less stringent regulations concerning amateurism; second, of being dragged into litigation by current internationals and third, that the abuse is increasingly widespread and affecting players outside the top echelons, notably at junior club level.

The onus will be on clubs to adhere, with the warning of severe penalties for those that fail to supply requested information.

Recommendations, page 38



Sure shot: Gascoigne, watched by his England team-mates, demonstrates the art of striking the ball cleanly during the build-up to Wembley. Photograph: Simon Walker

England must respect Dutch skill

By ROB HUGHES
FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

THE talking is mercifully over: at Wembley tonight, the two nations expected to dominate World Cup qualifying group two, England and Holland, must put action first.

Paul Gascoigne, in declaring himself fit and ready to show the Dutch his football, erred when he said on Monday that England must show the opposition no respect. If he meant no fear, fair enough; but respect them England must.

England are playing a country that, through Gullit, Rijkaard and van Basten, has transplanted its culture into Italy, turning sterility there into spontaneity.

Though van Basten is one of five injured and absent Dutchmen, if they approach their best at Wembley, the choices Graham Taylor has made will undoubtedly trigger the bar- racking in the crowd. One doubts those people have the

sensitivity to appreciate good football from England, let alone from the visitors.

But some of us admire Holland, neighbours from the same hemisphere and a similar climate able and willing to encourage more freedom, more individuality. The Dutch at their best still hold a candle to spontaneity that some horrible English coaching has all but snuffed out.

Watching and listening while the two camps have been at work, one is bound to observe that Dick Advocaat, an interim coach for Holland, has been the more positive. He will choose to attack the wide expanses of Wembley with two wingers — Ruud Gullit on the right, and Marc Overmars, 20, on the left.

The flanks will be a key area, not the least because, with Pearce and Dorigo hurt, Taylor has opted for Martin Keown, his former centre back at Aston Villa, at left back. The manager's observation that Keown is the best defensive

GROUP TWO

	P	W	O	L	F	A	Pts
Norway	4	3	1	0	15	2	7
England	4	3	1	0	13	1	7
Holland	3	3	1	1	15	6	7
Poland	2	1	1	0	8	2	3
Turkey	7	1	2	5	14	15	1
San Marino	6	0	1	5	28	1	1

RESULTS: Norway 10, San Marino 0; San Marino 0, Norway 2; Holland 1, Poland 1; Turkey 2, England 1; Norway 1, Poland 1; England 4, San Marino 0; Holland 3, England 0; San Marino 0, Holland 2; Turkey 1, San Marino 0; Turkey 0, Holland 0; San Marino 0, England 0.

FIGURES: Today, England v Holland, Norway v Turkey, Poland v San Marino, May 29; San Marino v Poland, May 29; Poland v England, Jun 2; Norway v England, Jun 5; Holland v Norway, Sept 8; England v Poland, Sept 22; San Marino v Holland, Norway v Poland, Oct 13; Holland v England, Poland v Norway, Oct 27; Turkey v Poland, Nov 10; Turkey v Norway, Nov 16; San Marino v England, Nov 17; Poland v Holland.

marker England possess may be valid, but whether he can cope with a resurgent Gullit is another matter.

Having passed 30, Gullit's pride has been hurt by insinuations that his prime may never be seen again. When he takes Keown wide on to the

touchline, when he opens that devouring nine-foot stride and uses his bewildering deception on the defender, one assumes John Barnes has been alerted to help the stand-in full back.

Taylor is at pains to say that he could not allow the boobies to dictate his selection for him. So Barnes is in and neither Waddle nor Merson are allowed to show that their form of late has been demonstrably more vibrant.

What happens if Barnes tracks back? He takes with him Aron Winter, the Gascoigne's team-mate at Lazio, and takes Winter closer to the England goal, where he should thrive.

The other flank will also be interesting. The Dutch are delighted about the speed of Overmars, whose low centre of gravity gives him bewitching balance. It may be that Dixon is the more pressed full back, particularly if Rob Witschge advances, as is his custom.

However, two equally intriguing confrontations might

settle affairs in the centre of the field. Gascoigne will no doubt advance behind Platt and Ferdinand, hoping and expecting to express himself in space. Jan Wouters, the new Holland captain, will be waiting for him.

Every Dutch player who has come up against Wouters will tell you that he is miscast as the ugly duckling, the bandy-legged misfit among the beauties of Dutch midfield play. Yet his attention will almost exclusively be given to putting Gascoigne off his game.

At the other end of the field, playing in the shadows, as he likes, will be Dennis Bergkamp, who Platt regards as "probably the most complete Dutchman of his time".

Advocaat operates a more sensitive management than Taylor. He seeks out his senior players, allows them to tell him how much freedom and strategic responsibility they think they can exercise and then, if it suits his plan, he allows it.

Therefore, after training two different ways last weekend to gauge where best to exploit Bergkamp's talents, he will opt for him in that narrow area between midfield and attack.

Crucial to England's attempt to fulfil Taylor's command, that they should dictate tempo and pace, will be Carlton Palmer. It will be his job to get into the areas that Bergkamp hopes to exploit, to carry out Taylor's assertion that "We are reluctant to let the opposition have it easy. The present England side are good at that."

Good may not be enough. Holland accept that defeat for them might be terminal to their World Cup hopes in a group where Norway — playing against Turkey tonight — are the front-runners and Poland have barely started.

With American World Cup organisers at Wembley, one thinks of the Wouters-Gascoigne contest and the American cliché: No pain, no gain.

More money on offer at Wimbledon

By ALEX RAMSAY

PRIZE-MONEY

THE prize-money at the Wimbledon tennis championships will break £5 million for the first time this year. The competitors are in line for a 14 per cent pay rise, with the men's champion picking up a cheque for £305,000 for his two weeks' work.

This year marks the hundredth women's championship and while the women, too, will benefit from an increase in prize-money, there is still no sign of them catching up with the men. Last year, Steffi Graf won £240,000; this year, the champion will take home £275,000.

Although the All England Club is planning celebrations to record the landmark in women's tennis, equal pay was never under consideration as one of them. "The women's game is improving all the time," John Curry, chairman of the club, said. "But like most women's sports it started later than the men and is in the process of catching up. We didn't see any reason to change the ratios. On the whole, the public prefers men's tennis."

The 14 per cent rise has been implemented to take account of fluctuating exchange rates as tennis becomes ever more international. After the sterling slide in September, the extra money was needed to keep Wimbledon in line with the other grand-slam events. The increases will also make life easier for the lesser lights of

the championships, with first-round men's losers earning £4,575.

There are improvements for the spectators, too. After the success of last year's experiment in allocating 2,000 centre court tickets on the middle Saturday to the faithful who queue outside the ground, the arrangement will be repeated. The tickets will be on sale at £20, a reduction of £8 on normal tickets, and the only difference this year is that the seats will be reserved, allowing the spectators to leave the court and return later.

□ Boris Becker was knocked out of the Madrid Open 6-2 in the first round by Franco Davin, of Argentina, yesterday. Becker has not won a match in the three successive clay-court tournaments in which he has played.

The Times offers the chance to win a trip to Las Vegas for the world heavyweight boxing title bout between Lennox Lewis and Tony Tucker

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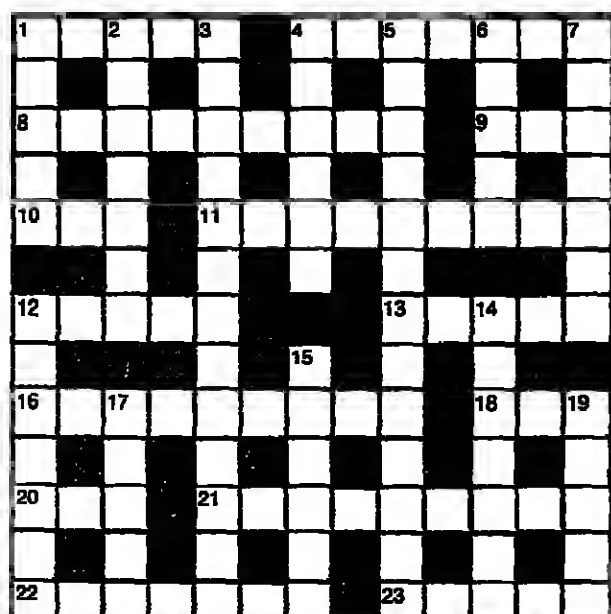
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ACROSS

- Car crash (5)
- Repress (3,4)
- Support financially (9)
- Hostelry (3)
- However (3)
- Two weeks (9)
- Swagger (5)
- Overturn (3,2)
- Bring to end (9)
- Illuminated (3)
- Cattle noise (3)
- Oceanic gull (9)
- Leading woman (7)
- Down duck (5)

DOWN

- Very pale (5)
- Referee (7)
- Mourning deeply (5,8)
- Monastery (6)
- Conforming (6,3,4)
- Due (5)
- Innocent (7)
- Arranged (7)
- Dehorn cattle (7)
- Fortress (6)
- Disorderly (5)
- Belonging to them (5)

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DOWN: 2 Whipper-in 3 Kit 4 Dirty box 5 Dull 6 Capricorn 7 DDT 11 Townships 13 Ad nauseam 14 Stampede 18 Pump 20 Tay 21 Box

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene, Chess Correspondent

This position is from the game Miles - van Riemsdyk, Sao Paulo 1993. Black's rook has strayed into the middle of the board. How did white exploit this?

Solution on page 36

Championship Chess, page 8

WORD-WATCHING

By PHILIP HOWARD

CAUCHO

- A Peruvian cowboy
- Rubber
- A musical direction

THAKALI

- A Greek hors d'oeuvre
- A Nepalese language
- A Phoenician goddess

RATHITE

- A kind of lead
- A South American sloth
- A rat's nest

LUAU

- A Polynesian grass skirt
- A Hawaiian party
- An Aboriginal woman

Answers on page 36

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